THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

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AT LAST.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY GYPSY WILDE.

Oh, eyes, sad eyes, that long have watched
A faint and far-off vision,
Rest you your tired sight at last
Upon a real Elysium.

Oh, head, that day and night has throbbed
With a weary burning pain;
Dost press a downy pillow now,
Within a beauteous fane?

Oh, heart, that all these years has borne
Thy crushing weight of sorrow;
Dost see the crescent promise set
Of a golden glad to-morrow?

Poor weary hands, that all this while
Have held a phantom treasure;
Dost clasp at last, close to thy heart,
A real and lasting pleasure?

Oh, feet, tired feet, that long have trod
A rugged, tortuous by-way;
Hast crossed so late, the border-line
To a royal golden highway?

Oh, life so chequered, life of pain,
Oh, life so strangely crossed!
No more alone on a wide, deep sea,
No more 'mid the wild waves tossed.

Oh, soul be glad, the goal is won—
The day hath for thee broken;
See glorious hues in thy cloud-sky set,
A reign of peace the token!

THE CHILTON ESTATE;

OR,

Close Play for a Fortune.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY RETT WINWOOD,

AUTHOR OF "A BLACK SHEEP IN THE FOLD," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XII.

THE STRANGE WOMAN.

There was a brief silence in the room. Claudia looked distressed, and more than half frightened. In an instant Mrs. Chilton's words came back to her mind.

"Were they true, I wonder?" she whispered softly to herself. "*Is* Hetty the demented creature my aunt would fain make me believe?"

Hetty's sudden burst of emotion had given a momentary coloring to Mrs. Chilton's story.

And it was only momentary. Claudia gazed into the girl's sweet face, now convulsed with bitter grief and remorse, but was unable to read any sign of madness there.

"My sweet sister," she cried, hugging her closely in her arms, all woman and so all tenderness, "why do you talk so wildly? Why are you unworthy to be my friend?"

Hetty shook her head and shuddered.

"I cannot tell you," she moaned. "Please don't ask me."

She tore herself out of those clinging arms, and glided two or three times up and down the floor, wringing her hands.

At last Claudia stopped her.

"I don't understand why you are so disturbed," she said. "But I will not ask you until you are free to explain. I only wish to love you, and do you good."

Hetty caught her hand, covering it with kisses and tears.

"You *have* done me good!" she cried. "You *are* good to me—ten thousand times better than I deserve."

Then she glanced quickly and almost defiantly toward the door, and raised her voice to a louder pitch.

"No matter what may come of it. I will never, never, *never* do aught to harm you, so help me Heaven!"

She spoke with almost savage vehemence, regardless of the spies whom Mr. Chilton might have placed within reach of her voice. Indeed she took a sort of pleasure in thus defying them.

Of course Claudia could not comprehend this outburst. She stared a little, and looked puzzled.

"Pray calm yourself," she entreated. "You frighten me with such speeches."

"Do I?"

"Yes. I don't know what I should suspect if I were at all imaginative." Claudia laughed lightly. "But I am not. I only fear that you are needlessly distressing yourself. Come, draw up your chair to this window. Let us forget everything that is disagreeable, and have a pleasant little chat together."

Hetty found it very hard, but she nerved herself to the ordeal before her. For Claudia's sake she shook off the overpowering sense of danger that had stupefied her, and endeavored to be easy and natural.

The day and the night passed. Hetty and Claudia breakfasted together the next morning—and immediately afterward descended the stairs for a ramble in the grounds.

They were passing out upon the terrace when Mrs. Chilton appeared, and called Hetty back.

"Of course you understand," she said, quietly, fastening her eyes upon the girl's face, "that your liberty is restricted?"

"It does not surprise me in the least to learn that it is," Hetty returned, with spirit.

"Humph. I should hope not.

Hetty turned impatiently away.

"How far can we go?"

"Anywhere within the grounds. But you are, on no account, to pass the gates."

A flush of anger and shame swept over the girl's face. Was she a dog, to yield passively to this woman's will?

Mrs. Chilton quickly detected her emotion.

"Go," she said, sharply. "My niece is waiting for you. But remember that the eyes of those who are paid to be faithful, are continually upon you."

"Shall I say to Claudia what you have just said to me?"

GERALD RAYMOND HEARS HETTY'S CRIES FOR HELP.

"If you dare," and her teeth clicked sharply together. "You are a provoking little fool! Now go. I have said quite enough."

"Yes, quite enough."

With these words Hetty moved on to join Claudia again—and the two girls were soon traversing the garden-walks.

The grounds were not large, nor very carefully kept. A good deal of shrubbery abounded in different portions, making it quite a secluded retreat.

They had penetrated this shrubbery when they heard footsteps and a voice. The voice was crooning a low ditty, very softly and very pathetically. It ceased suddenly, and a woman's figure stood before them.

She was quite an old woman, and was dressed in shabby black. She had a pale, thin, careworn face, and great, scared-looking eyes. Thin bands of gray hair were drawn back under the black-straw bonnet she had on.

It was a peculiar figure, to say the least. But stranger than anything else, was the sudden agitation that seized upon her the instant her startled gaze rested upon the girlish figures before her.

She stopped short, and for a few awful seconds almost ceased to breathe. Her hands trembled, and her wild eyes dilated more and more, as if positively starting from their sockets. Then a half-suppressed scream broke from her pallid lips.

"Merciful Heaven!"

She stood palpitating and trembling, as if she had seen a ghost. A deadly horror seemed to throb at her heart and creep among the roots of her hair.

After that first shrill exclamation, she struggled some seconds before she could again command her voice. Speech seemed suddenly to have been denied her.—But at last her quivering lips shaped themselves once more. She took one step nearer to the girls and stopped again.

"Who are you!" she gasped, in a strange, hoarse voice.

Neither Claudia nor Hetty answered this peremptory question. They could only stare at each other in mute wonder.

The poor creature waited a moment, and then began to wring her hands with an hysterical movement. "Am I mad?" she muttered to herself. "Do I see visions? Good God, what does it all mean? Why are there *two* of them—*two*, and so like?"

She turned and clutched fiercely hold of Hetty's arm.

"I want to know which of you two is Claudia Chilton," she screamed, shrilly. "I want to know! I must know! I will know!"

Her vehemence was really frightful. Hetty shrank away from her, very pale and somewhat panic-stricken. But she immediately made answer that her companion's name was Claudia Chilton.

The old woman glanced eagerly from one girlish face to the other. She still trembled and looked distressed.

"So like—so like!" she said, under her breath. Then she stole swiftly to Hetty's side again.

"Who are you?" she cried, in a voice of sharp suspicion. "You have not told me *your* name!"

"Hetty Deane!"

"Bah. I know better. What do you mean by trying to deceive me? What do you mean by giving me a name that is palpably false?"

"I have given you the only name by which I was ever called."

The strange woman looked up quickly and eagerly.

"Yes, yes," she muttered. "I am sure of that. But you have another name. Tell it to me."

"I know none other," Hetty replied, impatiently.

A perplexed, dissatisfied expression flitted over the woman's face. She was about to say more, but voices sounded near at hand, and footsteps were heard to approach.

"Hush!" she whispered, raising a warning finger. "You are watched, and they must not see us together."

She had turned to dart into the shrubbery when Claudia, alarmed by her last words, and more, perhaps, by the manner in which they were uttered, caught eagerly hold of her black dress.

"What do you mean by saying that we are watched?" she demanded.

"Hush! Nothing, nothing! Let me go!"

"You *shall* tell me!" cried Claudia, loudly, for anxiety and wonder had given her a strange sort of courage. "You *shall* tell me!"

"Hush! Not now. *They* are right upon us. I *must* go!"

She shook off Claudia's detaining hand, sent one quick, anxious glance all around, then slid into the dark depths of the shrubbery and disappeared.

Hetty was more unnerved by this meeting than she would have cared to confess. She felt that there was something mysterious in the whole affair. But prudence told her that if she wished to learn more in the future, she must be very careful of her present actions.

"Come," she said, in tones unnaturally clear and calm. "Let us go on."

She slid her arm about Claudia's waist, and fairly dragged her into the path again. The footsteps they had heard were now close upon them, and there was not a moment to lose.

"Where are we going?" asked Claudia.

"Wherever you like. Back to the house again?"

"Oh, no, no," quickly and nervously. "I can't go back just yet. I don't like to think of going back."

She was giving way to the first nervousness she had yet manifested. Hetty trembled as she observed this fact. "Oh, God," she secretly prayed, "keep her ignorant of her peril a little longer."

The instant Claudia knew the truth, there must be open war between her and Mr. Chilton. Hetty well might tremble, realizing this fact.

"Since you wish it, we will continue our ramble," she said, in a voice that was kept steady by a powerful effort of the will.

An abrupt exclamation from her companion caused her to turn at this instant. Claudia's finger was raised, and she was pointing down the walk.

"See!" she whispered, sharply. "There's a man hiding in those bushes yonder!"

Hetty caught a brief glimpse of a dark, swarthy face, which was immediately withdrawn. Then she remembered that the footsteps she had heard had ceased near that point.

Of course this man was one of Mr. Chilton's spies.

Had he seen the woman in black? Had he heard what she had said to them? It was impossible to tell. In any event it would be well to leave that vicinity as quickly as possible.

"Don't be frightened," she said, trying to speak assuringly. "It was one of the servants you saw, of course."

Claudia shivered, looking very pale indeed. "You saw him?" she demanded, eagerly.

"Yes," was the somewhat reluctant answer.

"Did it look like a servant's face? No, no! It was wicked, wolfish, vile! No man in his senses would keep the possessor of such a face in his service."

"Your imagination has distorted its expression, perhaps."

"No, no. It was fearfully malignant. The sight of it has filled me with horror. Come, let us hurry away from this fearful spot."

"With all my heart."

This was exactly what Hetty was wishing to do. She was glad that the proposition had, this time, come from Claudia, herself.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN ADVENTURE.

The two young ladies moved nearer to the house. But Claudia's agitation was not easily subdued. She still continued to pant and tremble.

"I believe that strange woman was right," she cried, at last, with sudden vehemence. "We are watched."

"Watched?" echoed Hetty.

"Yes. Why else was that evil-faced man lurking in the shrubbery? I saw how earnestly his eyes were bent upon us. What did it mean, if he was not a spy sent to dog our footsteps?"

Hetty changed color. For one instant the truth trembled upon her lips. But, for the girl's own sake, she thrust it back.

"How strangely you talk, dear," and she forced a laugh. "Whom do you suspect of watching our movements?"

Claudia slowly shook her head.

"Nobody," she reluctantly admitted. "That is what puzzles me. I don't know why anybody should surround us with spies. And yet somehow the conviction forced itself upon my mind."

"That woman's words must have put it there."

"They did—her words, and what I saw with my own eyes. Look at me, Hetty. I'm shaking from head to foot. Why is it? Why can't I banish that haunting fear from my mind? Why did it establish itself so firmly there at all?"

The sight of that white, pleading face was more than Hetty could bear. Her unnatural fortitude gave way. She caught Claudia in her arms, and kissed her over and over again, and wept on her bosom.

"God keep you!" she sobbed. "God help you."

Then she struggled hard for her lost self-possession, and found it again.

"What a silly goose I am," she said, drying her eyes. "But then I love you so dearly—so very dearly! You are the first real friend I ever had. I cannot bear to see you in trouble or anxiety of any sort."

A strange, vivid light had come into her eyes while speaking. She had seen that the path they had taken was leading them direct to the gate opening upon the high-road, and that this gate was standing wide open.

Could she pass it with her companion? On the other side lay liberty and life—two blessings worth a struggle.

She glanced quickly up and down the path, and in the direction of the house. Not one of Mr. Chilton's spies was in sight, so far as she could tell. Her heart beat fearfully loud; she scarcely breathed. But, though dreadfully agitated, she dared not let Claudia know the thoughts that were passing in her mind.

Should she venture?

She breathed a quick prayer for direction to God. The sharp thud of horses' hoofs in the high-road decided her. She caught Claudia's hand tightly in her own.

"Shall we walk outside the grounds?" she asked, in a whisper.

"Yes. I'd like it very much."

Another wordless prayer, and Hetty pushed straight ahead toward the gate, that now seemed like the entrance-way to Paradise.

She had nearly reached it, with Claudia clinging to her like some trusting child. Then, of a sudden, a cry and a howl sounded in the distance. The cry was echoed nearer at hand, and two dark figures rose up on either side of the gate.

Hetty stopped short, with a moan of despair. What a fool she had been to imagine that the gate had been left unguarded!

A second howl and a whisking sound caused her to turn her head and look backward. A large, brutal-looking bloodhound was rushing down the path straight toward the point where she and Claudia were standing.

A scream of horror burst from her lips. "Oh, God save us!" she shrieked, and started to run, dragging Claudia along with her.

For one moment her horror of the frightful beast overcame every other feeling. Obeying a natural impulse, she dashed up to the gate where the two men were standing.

The bloodhound overtook her at almost the same second. She caught the glare of his fiery eyes, and saw him give a final spring. Then she dropped her head on Claudia's neck, expecting to feel his teeth in her arm the next instant.

But she did not. The sharp report of a pistol rung on the air. A single howl of fury and agony sounded in her ear, and then all was deathly still.

At last she ventured to look up. The savage beast lay on the ground at her feet, dead!

Who had saved her and Claudia from its fury? The men at the gate? No; they stood like two statues, utterly stupefied by what had happened.

She glanced beyond them. There, on a powerful horse, sat a dark, handsome man of about thirty. In one hand he held a pistol, still smoking from the recent discharge. His dark, eloquent eyes were bent upon Hetty in an earnest look of interest and wonder.

She tried to speak, but could not. Another instant, and the gentleman had slid from the back of his horse and was standing by her side.

"Are you hurt?" he asked in a low, but very anxious voice.

Hetty shook her head.

"Only frightened? The beast was furious. What caused him to attack you in that manner?"

Hetty felt that all his remarks were addressed to herself. At last she found voice in which to frame a reply.

"I do not know," she faltered.

"He gave us a dreadful fright," shivered Claudia. "I know he would have torn us to pieces but for your timely assistance."

"You *have* had a narrow escape," and the man's own lips were white as he made this admission.

Footsteps came dashing down the walk at this instant, and Mr. Chilton made his appearance, quite out of breath with running.

"What's the matter?" he cried out, in a loud voice, as he approached. "What has happened?"

His face was ghastly, and a strange, lurid glow burned in his eyes. He looked like a man under the spell of some deadly fear that had driven him desperate.

The stranger pointed in silence to the dead hound. That was his only answer.

Claudia was first to speak.

"Oh, Uncle Eustace," she cried, "we have been terribly beset! This gentleman has saved Hetty's life and mine."

Mr. Chilton drew a deep breath of relief. A faint color came into his pallid cheeks.

"Good God!" he exclaimed, sharply. "I think I understand your peril now. I heard the pistol shot, and ran down to learn who had fired it."

He sprang forward as he spoke, and threw an arm about each of the girls.

"You are safe, both safe, my dears! Thank Heaven for that. Come down to the house with me. I can't trust you here another minute. Come, Hetty. Come, Claudia; you must be the first to tell your aunt of this adventure."

He still kept an arm about each of the girls, and began to walk rapidly up the path. They had no choice but to accompany him.

The stranger turned and kept pace with them. "I will go with you as far as the door," he said quietly.

Mr. Chilton bit his lip.

"You are very kind," he said, after a moment's silence. "You really lay us under too many obligations."

"The young ladies are not wholly recovered from their fright," he returned, with a keen glance into Hetty's pallid face. "I can not desert them until they are safely sheltered.

He spoke in such a kind, feeling voice, and seemed so considerate, that Hetty began to gather courage. She knew he was a brave, true man. Could she appeal to him to protect her and Claudia from a deadlier enemy than the bloodhound? Dared she do it?

The mere thought made her tremble. She felt Mr. Chilton's arm tighten as its pressure about her waist that she could scarcely breathe. Bending nearer, of a sudden, he whispered close to her ear:

"Make a loud noise and I'll kill you! You know me, and know that I mean what I say!"

His words, and the terrible look that accompanied them, sent a chill to her heart. A film dropped before her eyes; there was a ringing in her ears. Her voice failed her. Only by a powerful effort did she keep herself from fainting outright.

Mr. Chilton pushed on and on, toward the house. Hetty was almost a dead weight in his arms, but he did not seem to mind that. He was only anxious to get her away from the stranger's sight before any disagreeable discovery had been made.

"Poor dears! poor dears!" he kept murmuring. "You have had a terrible fright. I am so sorry."

At last they reached the hall steps. Here the stranger paused.

"Let me detain you for a single word," he said. "My name is Gerald Raymond. I have a villa between this and New York. Will you grant me the privilege of calling soon to inquire after the young ladies?"

"Certainly, certainly, sir," replied Mr. Chilton, with a ready smile. "Come as soon as you please, and as often."

"Thank you."

The words were for Mr. Chilton, but his eyes were fixed upon Hetty's convulsed face. Something in its expression seemed both to interest and perplex him. It was full of agonized entreaty and distress.

"Is there nothing more I can do to serve you?" he asked, still regarding the young girl.

"Nothing," returned Mr. Chilton, hastily. "Good-morning, sir."

He pushed Hetty almost roughly up the steps as he spoke. At the moment she had no strength to resist, no strength to cry out.

The hall-door closed with a clang. It sounded to Hetty like the door of a tomb. A momentary flash of courage came back to her. She tore herself free from Mr. Chilton's hold, and flung herself wildly against the door.

"Save me!" she cried, in accents of frantic appeal.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE NET TIGHTENS.

Hetty's scream for help was the last effort of a desperate woman.

She had seen Gerald Raymond turn slowly to go away. That was too much for human endurance. It seemed as if her very life would go with him. Unknown horrors loomed darkly before her. She saw a thousand perils—like one in a dream—threatening Claudia and herself.

She beat madly upon the door with her fists. "Lost, lost!" she moaned. "For the love of Heaven, come back! Come back and save us!"

Her voice rose to a shriek. She beat loud and more loudly upon the door. The strength of despair was in her arms.

Mr. Chilton sprang suddenly upon her. There was a very brief struggle. Then he caught hold of her wrists and held them in a vice-like grip.

"You d——d fool!" he hissed savagely.

Hetty saw his wicked face bent close to her own. She felt his hot breath on her cheek. Then the deathly faintness against which she had once struggled successfully, again beset her. This time she had no strength to ward it off. She drew a quick, gasping breath, and fainted dead away.

Mr. Chilton looked relieved. His wife had come gliding into the hall while the struggle was going on. He quickly yielded up the unconscious girl to her care.

He had a reason for this. Determined footsteps were coming up the steps, and he knew that Gerald Raymond was coming back.

Controlling the expression of his features by a powerful effort, he swung wide the door. "Did you hear the screams of that poor creature?" he said, meeting Raymond face to face on the threshold. "Dreadful, isn't it?"

Raymond looked at him keenly and half-distrustfully.

"I heard somebody cry out for help, or at least thought I did."

"It was the young girl whom my niece has engaged for a companion," Mr. Chilton returned, very gravely. "She was with her in the grounds just now. The danger through which she has passed made her hysterical."

"Can I see her?"

"She is now unconscious. Yonder she lies in my wife's arms. Certainly, sir, come in and look at her if you desire."

Raymond hesitated. He could see Hetty's white, still face from where he stood. She was indeed in a dead faint.

"I will not intrude at such a time," he said, reluctantly. "I beg your pardon for having come back at all."

"No apologies, I beg," cried Mr. Chilton, glibly. "I would have come back in your place. But we are used to these hysterical fits of the girl's, and do not mind them much. To be frank with you, sir, she is not right here," and he tapped his forehead significantly.

"Not crazy?" cried Raymond, in a voice of horror.

"No, that would be saying too much, for she is never more violent than she was just now. Her nervous system must be very much shattered, I think. That is all. Good-morning, sir, and thanks, a thousand thanks for the interest you manifest in my household."

He bowed and smiled so blandly that Gerald Raymond could not tell whether these last words were intended to be sarcastic or not.

"Good-morning," he said, in answer, and went away.

Mr. Chilton closed the door softly and quickly behind him. "You have heard all," he said, looking hard at Claudia, who was leaning white and still against the wall. "Did I do right in sending him away so summarily?"

"I don't know," she faltered, in a scared voice.

"Poor Hetty," he went on, commiseratingly. "I was sorry to make her misfortune so public. But I have spared her all I could—even making myself liable to the charge of being inhospitable."

"Was it for her sake you wished to get rid of Mr. Raymond?"

"Of course. Did you not know? I thought you must have observed something peculiar in her manner ere this."

Claudia looked puzzled.

"I did not. Aunt Chilton told me about her. But I had nearly forgotten it."

"Poor girl. It is only at times that she exhibits any symptoms of madness. But she is much worse than I gave Mr. Raymond to understand. You saw for yourself what she did just now."

"Yes, yes."

"She beat on the door, and screamed for help. Her idiosyncrasy always takes that form. She imagines that some peril threatens either herself or those about her."

"Poor Hetty."

"You may well say 'poor Hetty.' It will be a mercy if she does not lose her reason entirely."

Claudia waited to hear no more. Indeed, what she had heard already confused and bewildered her. With tears of pity in her beautiful eyes she ran forward and kissed Hetty's cold lips over and over again.

"Take her up to my room, Aunt Chilton," she cried, eagerly. "I will ring for one of the maids."

Mrs. Chilton slowly shook her head.

"You may ring for the maid if you like. But Hetty must be carried to her own bedroom. You are not fit to be with her until you are more composed yourself."

"Oh, Aunt Chilton! I am not such a weak, foolish creature as you seem to think. I can control myself if I try."

But Mrs. Chilton was firm. When the maid-servant appeared, she silently signed for her to help carry the unconscious girl up-stairs to the little room she occupied.

Claudia followed, however. For once she was not to be daunted by her aunt's chilling looks.

"I can't leave poor Hetty," she said, apologetically, going up to the bed whereon they had laid her. "I can't leave my poor dear friend."

Mrs. Chilton bit her lip in real perplexity. "She may be raving mad when she comes to her senses again," she said, harshly. "Didn't my husband tell you so? You saw for yourself how frantic she was before she lost her consciousness."

"No matter. That is only another reason why I should remain with her now."

An expression of sweet resolution came into Claudia's face. The wily woman saw it, and was silent.

Restoratives were brought, and by and by Hetty's bosom began to heave again, and her pulses to throb. She drew a long sobbing breath, and opened her eyes.

"Where am I?" she asked, staring vacantly at the faces bending over her.

Then memory seemed to return. She started up wildly.

"Oh, Claudia, is he gone?" she screamed. "Is he gone? Cry to him from the window. Bring him back. *He* is good and kind and true. Oh, for the love of Heaven, don't let him go away!"

"Hush!" said Mrs. Chilton, pushing her back upon the pillow. "You rave!"

"Do try to compose yourself, my dear," whispered Claudia, with a look of divine pity. "We are in no danger. We are safe and sound in your own bedroom."

"In my bedroom!"

"Yes, in your bedroom at Chilton Villa."

Hetty lay quite still, moaning softly. Her eyes gradually lost their wild, bewildered expression, and the agitated flush died out of her face.

She realized, at last, the harm she was doing by giving way to this outburst.

"Oh, yes, yes," she murmured, feebly. "I realize it all, now. I have been beside myself."

A grim smile of satisfaction curled Mrs. Chilton's lips at these words. She drew back a step or two.

"My dear Claudia," she said, blandly, "you see how much better Hetty is already. I did not hope for such favorable symptoms. You better leave her quite to herself until she has had some repose."

"Yes," sighed Hetty, softly. "Go away, my dear friend. I am tired, oh, so tired."

"Mustn't I watch over you while you sleep?" urged Claudia, moved to tears by that pitiful voice.

Hetty caught Mrs. Chilton's threatening glance, and answered:

"It is not best, my dear. Good-bye."

They kissed each other, and Claudia went reluctantly away. Mrs. Chilton remained behind. There was a brief silence, and then she demanded in a harsh, unfeeling voice:

"What did you mean by the folly of which you have just been guilty? Answer me that."

"I was mad—mad!"

A cruel sneer curled the woman's lip. She glared malignantly upon the poor, trembling creature before her.

"Humph. I should say as much. Girl, you meant to betray us! You meant to betray us!"

Hetty could only sob, and sigh, and moan.

"Yes, you meant to betray us. But we proved too many for you. And so it will be to the end of the chapter. Fool, fool, to measure your puny strength against ours!"

The poor girl now found voice again, under the influence of a sudden fear that beset her.

"What will you do with me?"

"I don't know. Whatever my husband and Reginald and Mr. Lamont think best. Of course they will punish you in some manner for your attempted treachery."

Hetty slid out of the bed and threw herself at the woman's feet.

"Don't separate me from Claudia," she implored. "Don't, don't, don't! Anything but that! I beg of you not to be so cruel."

"We cannot trust you."

Hetty fell back, moaning and wringing her hands. What could Claudia do without her? She would fall an easy victim into the clutches of the wretches who sought to do her injury.

Mrs. Chilton stood silently watching her for some minutes. At last she turned and walked quickly out of the room.

At the end of half an hour she came back again.

"I have talked with my husband and the rest," she said, coldly. "And, for the present, all is to go on as if nothing had happened. We are not disposed to be hard with you. You are given a chance to redeem yourself. For your own good, I do hope you will embrace it."

This was all. She did not even wait to hear Hetty's broken words of thankfulness, but went quickly out again and closed the door behind her.

The concession surprised Hetty not a little. Why was it? Did the wretches dread the effect upon Claudia if she was so suddenly and harshly separated from her?

She could conceive of no other reason why they were so lenient.

"Claudia's love for me, and mine for her, may prove our salvation after all," she thought. "How strange that we should grow so fond of each other in such a little while!"

It was not so singular as she thought it; and so she would have discovered, if she had been given the power to pierce the veil of futurity, and anticipate the secrets time was waiting to reveal.

CHAPTER XV.

A MIDNIGHT VISITOR.

Hetty did not see Claudia again that day or that night. Her room-door was locked from without soon after Mrs. Chilton had paid that second visit.

She heard Claudia try the door, after a little. She turned the knob softly, not to awaken Hetty, should she prove to be sleeping.

Of course the door did not yield. Then footsteps came along the passage, and Mrs. Chilton's bland voice said,

"Miss Deane has locked herself in. I think she would rather not be disturbed."

"Is she worse?"

"No. But she is scarcely strong enough to see any one to-day."

"Poor Hetty," said Claudia, in a compassionate voice, and went back to her room again.

The day wore on. Night had fallen more than an hour, when one of the maidservants came up with a tea-tray.

"My mistress has sent up your supper, she said, briefly.

She went out and closed the door, but did not lock it. Hetty knew from this circumstance that she was now free to go or come as she pleased.

The maid had left the tray on the table. Hetty was not hungry, but thought a cup of tea might help her head, which was aching sadly.

A smoking cup stood by the plate that had been laid for her. She raised it to her lips, scarcely tasted its contents, and then set it down with a shiver.

"I'm afraid!" she murmured, and then began to tremble. She did not know what she feared, or why she feared at all.

She threw herself on the couch, and tried to sleep. Some hours wore on in this manner. The strange stillness peculiar to the dead hours of night stole over the house gradually.

Into this deathly quiet came a sudden sound. It was a sharp, rustling noise, and a hurried breathing outside the door.

Hetty sprang up in a panic. Her mind had all along been filled with terrible forebodings, and here seemed to be the realization of them all, for she knew it could not be Claudia who was seeking her at that hour.

She had turned her bed-lamp low without wholly extinguishing it. Now she let on the full blaze, and stood with her eyes fixed upon the door.

A breathless moment of suspense, and then the door swung noiselessly open and a woman crossed the threshold.

Hetty saw at a glance that it was the same strange creature who had come so suddenly upon her and Claudia in the garden.

She was now divested of her bonnet and shawl, but her pale, thin face looked paler and thinner than ever in the spectral glow of the lamp light.

"Hist!" she breathed, in a whisper, with a long, bony finger on her lip. "Don't speak a loud word, for the love of Heaven."

Hetty's courage returned at this address. She knew that the woman was not there to harm her.

"What do you want?" she asked.

"I came here to help you and to save you if you will only trust me," she answered, in an agitated voice.

Then she looked hard at Hetty, and began nervously to clasp and unclasp her fingers as if scarcely knowing how to go on.

"Do you live here?" asked Hetty.

"Yes. I've been away, but I came back to-day. I didn't know what was drawing me back at the time;" and she shivered, and gave a scared look about the room and toward the door. "But I know now. It was God. He knew I was needed here, and He brought me back again."

She paused, and hid her face for a moment, and tears came into her faded, odd-looking eyes.

Of a sudden her gaze fell upon the tray. She started eagerly forward.

"You did not drink your tea?" she cried, in a shrill whisper.

"No, I could not."

"I'm glad of that. Don't drink it. Don't drink anything those devils may give you. Don't, I tell you."

She spoke wildly, and with almost angry emphasis. Hetty's eyes fell, and her face grew ghastly under the gaze that was bent upon it.

"I know what you mean," she said, faintly.

"You do? Then be careful what you eat and drink in this house. I tried to get up here sooner to tell you this. But I could not."

She turned abruptly and laid her long, bony hands on Hetty's shoulders.

"Let me look my fill at you," she said, abruptly. "I like your face. It is the picture of another face I knew long ago. I may look at you?"

She was going back to her old manner that had been so perplexing in the garden. The old, half-maniacal light was in her eyes.

"Yes, yes," Hetty exclaimed. "Look at me as much as you please. And then tell me of whom I remind you."

The woman slowly shook her head.

"No, child, you must not ask that. I can't tell you. It is nothing—nothing."

She drew back, trembling and very much agitated. There was a silence in the room that lasted for some minutes.

"I'm going to help you," she said at last. "I am going to be your friend. You need one very much in this house."

"I know it."

"Ah," with a quick glance and a shrug, "you are shrewder than I gave you credit for being. So much the better. I see you have used your eyes and ears to good purpose. Then I have no need to explain anything."

"I know there is villainy of the basest kind going on here, if that is what you mean."

"That is what I mean. What an odd child you are, to be sure," and she put out her hand half caressingly. "Sit closer to me, my dear, and tell me your story."

Strange as were the woman's ways, incoherent as was her speech at times, Hetty felt drawn to her rather than repelled. She was drawing nearer to her when she suddenly started up.

"Hush!" she cried, in a sharp whisper. Then she bent her head to the door. She heard, or fancied she heard a step approaching.

"We are watched," she went on, speaking with startling emphasis. "We are not alone. Tell me nothing now."

She sprang toward the door, and her wild, frightened face instantly vanished.

Hetty sat very still and listened. She heard a single sharp cry in the passage. Then there followed a low murmur, as if two persons were conversing in whispers.

This finally died away, and the door was opened a little once more, suddenly and sharply, and the head of Mrs. Chilton introduced.

She glanced quickly and searchingly round the room. She was paler than usual, and for some reason seemed violently agitated.

Finally she crossed the threshold. "You are not in bed," she began by saying.

Her faded eyes were turned toward Hetty as she spoke. But she looked beyond, and not at her.

"No, Mrs. Chilton, I could not sleep."

"Humph. You've had a visitor."

"A visitor?"

"A visitor," a sneer curling her thin lip. "Jane Burke has been here. I saw her go away."

"Is that woman's name Jane Burke?"

"Yes," sharply. "What brought her here at this hour of the night? What did she have to say to you?"

"She had very little to say," Hetty returned, perfectly aware that Mrs. Chilton was awaiting her answer with intense interest. "She seems to be a very peculiar woman."

"Mad—that is the word. Mad as a March hare!"

"You don't mean it?"

"I do. Her face alone betrays her. Who ever saw such eyes in the head of a sane woman?"

Mrs. Chilton laughed softly to herself. It was a strange, horrible laugh, but seemed to relieve her. She looked more at ease afterward.

"You did not drink your tea?" she said, suddenly, with a quick glance.

"No. I did not want it."

"Indeed. You are an odd creature, Hetty Deane. Why are you shivering? Are you cold?"

"Yes," faintly.

"I don't wonder. This house is full of drafts, and you are still very weak. Hadn't you better go to bed?"

"Directly."

"Do. Good-night."

"Good-night."

Mrs. Chilton emptied the contents of the teacup into the grate, and put the cup back upon the tray again. Then she disappeared.

Left alone of course Hetty had a thousand things of which to think.

A vague presentiment assailed her mind that her own personal danger had been trebled by Jane Burke's visit to her chamber.

But how could this be possible? She could not tell. And yet the conviction remained unchangeable, foolish and fanciful as it seemed.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

A day and a night, and then another day and a night went by, and nothing happened.

Hetty observed that Mr. Chilton watched her more closely than he had done before, and with a deadlier look in his eyes—that Mrs. Chilton was colder and more restrained, but that was all.

Reginald she seldom saw.

Her intercourse with Claudia was resumed exactly where it had been broken off. The two girls loved each other too fondly to be easily alienated. Claudia was puzzled by some things that had happened, but she found it hard to believe in Hetty's fits of insanity, in spite of what her aunt and uncle had said.

During those two days Jane Burke disappeared from the scene as wholly as if the earth had suddenly swallowed her up. Hetty had not the slightest idea what had become of her.

But the effect of her warning words still remained. Hetty was very careful what she ate and drank, and she fell into the habit of locking her bed-room door at night.

During the second day a carriage drove up before the door. Hetty was on one of the upper balconies, at the time. She saw Mr. Chilton hurry down the steps with more alacrity than he usually displayed.

The stranger who had given his name as Gerald Raymond pushed open the carriage-door a little, and looked out.

"The young ladies!" he said hastily, after a very slight bow. "I have taken the liberty to come over to inquire after them."

"Thank you," said Mr. Chilton, politely. "They are wholly recovered from their fright of the other day, and will be anxious to express their gratitude for the signal service you rendered them. But, I regret to say, they are out driving at the present time."

Hetty uttered an indignant cry as she listened to this shameless falsehood. She leaned over the rail, trembling with eagerness to speak to Mr. Raymond, and let him know how near she was.

Would he see her—would he hear her?

Neither one nor the other. But Mr. Chilton did both. He looked up quickly. With ready presence of mind, he said, almost immediately:

"Excuse me. The sun is in my eyes on this side of the carriage. If you care to continue our conversation, I will remove to the other."

He did not wait for an answer, but quickly changed his position, thus compelling Mr. Raymond to address him from the carriage door that was turned away from the house.

"Infamous!" muttered Hetty, feeling how completely she had been defeated.

But the end was not yet. She had scarcely paused to deliberate when Mrs. Chilton's voice said at her elbow:

"You had better come in, Miss Deane. I think Claudia is looking for you."

These words were blandly spoken, but they were meant as a command all the same. Hetty knew it, and stepped into the house without a word.

Another chance lost! Great Heavens, were they all to elude her like this until the end of utter ruin and horror was reached.

She waited in the passage to recover herself, and fully five minutes had elapsed before she reached Claudia's room. She found her friend standing by the window, looking flushed and agitated.

"Hetty," Claudia cried, turning quickly, "who came and went away in that carriage just now?"

Hetty sprang forward, clasping her hands. "Then the carriage is really gone?"

Claudia nodded, and pointed down the road, where could be seen a last glimmer of wheels.

"It was Mr. Raymond—you know whom I mean?—the gentleman who saved us from the bloodhound."

"I knew it!" cried Claudia, excitedly. Then she walked up and down the room two or three times. "Of course he wishes to see us. What does Uncle Eustace mean by letting him go away like this?"

There was no answer, and she came nearer and looked Hetty straight in the eyes.

"What does he mean?" she demanded.

There was vague distrust of her relatives, a vague suspicion of her surroundings expressed in her countenance, and to a less degree, in her words.

Distrust and suspicion that might easily be changed to conviction. Hetty realized this fact, and answered faintly:

"I do not know."

"It is very strange, at any rate. And I, for one, do not like it."

She seemed to reflect a moment, and when she spoke again, it was very deliberately and thoughtfully.

"Did you never think that we lead a strange, isolated sort of life here? We exchange visits with nobody."

"True."

"Why is it? One would think Uncle Eustace had committed some terrible crime that had banished him from society. I don't understand it? Do you?"

"No," said Hetty, coldly, though she was secretly trembling. "Let us not try to understand it. Let us talk of something else."

"Of what?"

"Your Cousin Reginald, for instance."

The words were spoken at random, but Claudia started and turned pale:

"No, no," she cried. "We will not talk of him. I was always somewhat afraid of him. And now I begin to fear him more than ever."

"Why?"

"There is something so—so—strange in his manner to me—so peculiar," she faltered. "It grows worse and worse, and now I positively dislike to be in his society. I am afraid—"

She paused suddenly, blushing very red, and ashamed to finish the sentence she had begun.

But Hetty understood her. "Claudia," she cried, eagerly, "promise me that you will see him as little as possible; that you will have nothing to say to him when it can be avoided."

"Oh, I will readily promise that."

There the conversation ended. Maiden modesty prevented Claudia from continuing it, and Hetty was deterred by quite another motive—one that was stronger still.

No allusion was again made to Gerald Raymond's visit during the remainder of that day.

The next morning Claudia insisted upon taking a turn in the grounds. Hetty went down stairs with her very reluctantly, for the memory of the former ramble they had taken was still very fresh in her mind.

Moreover, would not Mr. Chilton's espionage be now closer than ever?

Upon the terrace they lingered a little, and the same vague uneasiness seemed to have beset both their minds.

A hasty step crossed the verandah, presently, and Reginald Chilton joined them.

He bowed, and said, "Good morning" with a smile, but his dark face seemed a trifle paler than usual.

"I was looking for you, Claudia," he said quietly.

"Indeed," she answered, coloring.

"Yes, take my arm, won't you? Let us turn down this path and walk on a few steps."

As he spoke he quietly slipped her hand over his arm, and began to move away. She could not refuse to accompany him without absolute rudeness.

Hetty saw her draw a quick breath, and cast an imploring glance back at herself. She seemed to know what was coming. But what could poor Hetty do to help her?

Reginald did not speak until they were quite out of sight from the house. Then he paused under an old oak, and said, abruptly:

"Claudia, dear cousin, I have something to say to you—something that could not be said in the presence of a third person, that is why I have brought you here."

The suppressed agitation of his voice made her tremble. "Another time, Reginald," she murmured, faintly. "Tell me some other time."

"No. I must speak now. I have waited too long already. Can you not guess what it is I wish to say?"

His burning eyes were on her face, reading it like a printed page. He saw her shrink and shudder and clasp her small white hands imploringly.

"I see that you do guess," he went on, eagerly and brokenly. "You know that I love you! You know that I am the slave of a single passion—that I adore your beautiful image as others adore the god they worship. You know that my whole soul is wrapped and bound up in you. That I live only in your presence—that I famish and die when away from you. Yes, you know all this, my beautiful darling!"

The torrent of fierce words was suddenly checked. He drew back a step or two, panting and gloating over her.

"Speak!" he cried at last. "Only a word, my Claudia, a sign, a single motion of your head, and I shall understand you. Oh, you must, you shall, you do love me!"

He was bending over her again, covering her hands with hot kisses, and murmuring broken ejaculations in her ear.

The poor girl shivered out of his embrace at last. The fountains of speech began to flow again.

"Don't!" she gasped, pitifully. "Oh, don't, don't!"

He stood still and looked at her. The pallor of his face deepened into something awful.

"What do you mean?" he cried.

"I do not love you."

There was a dangerous glare in his eyes, now. "You do not love me?" he echoed, in a strange voice.

"No," wringing her hands helplessly. "I thought you knew. You *do* know. I have plighted my troth to Roland Trevor. I shall live true to him all my life."

"A school-girl passion. You will soon forget it, Claudia."

"I shall never forget it," she cried, a dash of red leaping into her cheeks. "I have given my whole heart to—"

He stopped her with a motion of his hand. "Don't answer me now, sweet cousin," he said. "You shall think of this matter until to-morrow. I have been too hasty. You shall answer me then. And please bear in mind that I love you too well ever to give you up."

He waited for no answer—to hear no declaration—but swung on his heel and was gone.

Claudia fled like a mad-woman back to the terrace where Hetty was waiting.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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☞ The other day, a pleasant-looking gentleman, of foreign appearance and accent of speech, entered a tobacconist's shop in one of the market towns of South Durham, says the London Grocer, and requested that he might be supplied with a good segar. The article having been furnished to him, he proceeded to apply it to his nose with the air of a connoisseur, and then to protest that its flavor was most peculiar, not to say offensive. The worthy tradesman declared that the segar was an excellent one; his visitor as stoutly maintained that it was not, and that he was so convinced of the fact that he at once determined to try what the segar was really made of. Taking a penknife from from his pocket, he began to cut the "weed" in two, and had no sooner commenced to do so than a quantity of feathers dropped from the segar. The more he cut the faster the feathers flew, until the whole segar had been whittled away, and the shop looked more like an upholsterer's than a tobacconist's. Having given this ocular and practical proof that he had not remarked the peculiar flavor of the segar without reason, the foreign gentleman took his departure, leaving the shopkeeper utterly bewildered and the possessor of a quantity of feathers, enough to stuff an ordinary cushion. The customer was a conjurer.

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So many subscriptions expire at that time, that it is impossible to re-enter them on our books at once, if they are all held back to the last moment. Besides, such a great accumulation of work is a cause of frequent errors, as well as of delay.

If those therefore who can make it convenient will renew *early*, they will save us a great deal of trouble, and themselves the danger of there being any break in the regular weekly arrival of their paper.

THE FAIRY GODMOTHER.

I was working in the garden, trying to thin out some rampant radishes which would all go to tops. I had fallen into a day-dream over them about what I would do if a gold-mine, or an oil-well (it was in Pennsylvania) were discovered on our scraggy bit of land, or if the fairy prince came who was to be my fate; for, of course, I believed in such a fairy prince—every girl does, though he may take the shape of a dapper dry-goods clerk to one, or an intellectual giant to another. I was mercenary in my dreaming. I was building a new house, a veritable chateau in Spain, when dear old dad called me. Quickly I demolished it, and with one or two very spiky radishes in my not snow-white hands, I ran through the garden paths, as rapidly as the straggling weeds would allow, into the house—the dear old dilapidated house, with its worn carpets and venerable furniture. I had tried to brighten one of the rooms with chintz fixings, and it did look cosier than the rest. I knew my dear old dad would be there, and so he was, standing with the sunlight on his head, and his figure slightly stooped, through trouble, not through age, and that wistful look in his pale-blue eyes, which I knew so well.

"I am taking account of stock," I cried, very cheerily, for I saw he had something on his mind. "It's principally radish stock, I find. Dearest dad, would you mind living on radish-tops for a month or two?"

"My dear," he replied, gravely, "I have something to say to you."

"Well, dad, I'll just go and wash my hands, and then I can listen in peace."

And I went, wondering a little what it could be about. Many's the talk we had had together in the lonely years since my mother had left us and our poor belongings for the shining courts above. I had been a wee creature then, but I installed myself as my father's housekeeper at once, our housekeeping being a simple experiment of making nothing go as far as possible.

I sat down soberly enough near my father when I went back, and looked fondly up into his dear face. He was a handsome man yet, with a sensitive face, full of delicate expression; but even I knew there was a lack of force there which had made him one of the losers in the great battle of life. I could see a tremulous movement about the lips now.

"Cinda," he began, almost timidly, "I don't want you to hear it from gossips before you hear it from me. I'm—I'm going to marry again."

"Oh, my dear old dad!" I cried, with a sob, "don't I do all I can for you?—don't I satisfy you?"

"My darling, you are as good as gold, and I am thinking of your good. You are old enough now to go into society; you are pretty; and you haven't a sign of a chance in life. We're as poor as—well, Job's turkey was an opulent bird compared to us; and I see only one way out of it. I have met a widow lady with some property and two daughters nearly your age. Won't it be pleasant for you to have company?"

I'm afraid I grew rampant then. Was it Mrs. Benham Brown? I didn't want her company; and her two stuck-up daughters! Oh, I had been so happy with my dear old dad, and he—with more sobbing—was tired of me!

He soothed me as best he could, my darling father, but the ugly fact remained the same. We were to have no more sweet long talks together, no lingering walks, and day-dreams. There was a little brushing up of the old house, till it looked like a very shaky old lady with some new finery on; then the bride—a dashing, large woman—and her two daughters—fine-looking women in their way—took possession—literally took possession, till I felt that I had not a corner to call my own, except the kitchen; no one disputed those quarters with me; I seemed sinking into the position of a household drudge, and no one held out a helping hand.

Instead of being benefitted by the change in our home, as my poor father had fondly hoped, and being presented in society, it was always discovered that, like Miss Flora MacFlimsey, I had nothing to wear. Whatever my stepmother had, she expended on herself and girls; so Rose and Lily went out in gay attire, while "Cinder," as she called me, sat at home in sackcloth and ashes.

My dear old dad made a few attempts in my behalf, but after awhile resigned himself, as he always did to every earthly ill, with a patient smile. I could not resign myself. I beat my head mercilessly against the bars of a remorseless fate. I looked back to the Heaven of the old days with a passionate longing. The still old house seemed full of harsh noises, my stepmother's voice being of the shrillest kind. She was a bustling New England woman, what people call an efficient housekeeper, and she went through the house like an easterly wind. "Cinder—Cinder" resounded everywhere in ear-splitting tones, till I found that I had better stay in the kitchen, so as to be on hand for all the various kinds of work to which I was hourly called. I lost my spirits; I did not sing any more; I seemed fast sinking into a veritable drudge, like the Cinderella of old.

"Come, now, Cinder, fly round spry. There's a storm comin' on, and we want them beans picked first."

It was about four o'clock of a hot August day when my stepmother called thus to me at the kitchen-door. I had been at work all day, and when I caught sight of my face in the little square of glass which hung in the kitchen, I thought it looked white and tired enough. Yet I knew it was, as my father had called it, a pretty face, though the roses were not so bright, or the eyes so sparkling now.

I put on the great flapping garden-hat and a pair of old gloves, and went out, glad on any terms to escape from the house. I picked for awhile; then, the back-gate being open, and a glimpse of the quiet churchyard in the distance meeting my wandering eyes, I felt an inexpressible desire to look at my mother's grave, though her memory was as dim as a dream. Somehow, I had fallen into the habit of going there when I felt particularly miserable. I forgot about the storm now, and threw myself, exhausted, on the green sod by the grave. The plain gravestone, with the name "Lucinda Grey, beloved wife of Laurence Grey, aged 30 years," was wreathed with ivy which I had planted, and a little clump of heliotrope filled the air with perfume.

"I wonder if it is not better to be under the sod than over it?" I thought, as I rested there, calmed by the great calm. "But, then, my mother had lived her life, short as it was; she had tasted this world's bliss; she had lived and loved. Now, with me, life has not commenced. I have not got into the story yet; I wonder if it will be an interesting one."

I had taken off my flapping hat, and at that moment a great drop falling on my nose recalled me from my dreaming. I glanced up to the sky, and saw a great black cloud suddenly embroidered with gold in a somewhat startling style. I was a coward in a thunder-storm, and I suppose I clasped my hands in a tragic manner, when I heard a voice near me—"Pardon me, but if my umbrella can be of any use," and the young gentleman who offered it stood looking at me with what I chose to consider an amused air.

I meant to decline haughtily, but a gust of wind and some heavy raindrops decided me. I did not dare stay under the trees in a thunder-storm.

"Thank you," I said demurely, looking at the six foot of politeness standing near me—a tall fellow, with a blonde beard and hair. His blue eyes looked familiar, too; yet I did not know him.

"Are you fond of meditating among the tombs?" he asked, after a moment.

"Yes, when I am tired of people," I answered.

"Ah, misanthropic! So you find the spirits better company?"

"Yes, I like it here. One does not get snubbed, or ordered, or scolded here. I wonder how these unruly spirits that make one so uncomfortable below behave when they get into the world of spirits—I mean really good people, who have their peculiarities, as they say."

He looked at me with an amused smile, which recalled me to myself, for I had been thinking aloud, and I suddenly remembered that I had been letting him behind the scenes. I colored violently.

"To be sure, the really good people, who are continually nagging one, cannot be consigned to the Inferno, I suppose; but I think they must

"'—— Suffer a sea-change
Into something new and strange,'

before one could be happy with them in Heaven."

My flapping hat caught the wind like a sail, and I began to be conscious that I was looking very shabby and odd in my faded blue lawn, with the half-worn gardening gloves on my hands. My escort looked like a gentleman. I felt that I must explain my position.

"I was sitting by my mother's grave," I said. "I did not see you, or any one, when I went in."

"Oh, I am not a spirit; you needn't give me such a frightened look. I had been into the vestry to get a paper for my father."

"Your father!"

Now I knew why the blue eyes looked familiar. This was Leonard Rossiter, the minister's son. Unlike most young men in that position, he was rich, had been educated abroad, and had been away from home so long, that I wondered I recollected him at all.

"And you are one of the lambs of the flock, I suppose." I ought to know all the lambs—but I don't.

"I am Lucinda Grey. How I hate the name!" I exclaimed.

"Well, you can change it," he vouchsafed.

"I mean the Lucinda. My stepmother calls me Cinder. *Poor me!* I am a real Cinderella—stepmothers, sisters, and all that—only the fairy godmother, and the pumpkin coach, and the—" I hesitated.

"And the prince," laughed the young man. "Has he not appeared? I am so glad!"

A terrific clap of thunder reminded me that I was still among the trees. The rain began to pour.

"We had better go into the vestry," said Mr. Rossiter. "You will be drenched in that thin dress."

I was glad to hurry in, and we stood by the window, watching the storm. I took off the flapping hat, and rubbed my hand furtively over the mop of hair which would curl so tightly in damp weather. I had the pleasing consciousness that I looked like a fright.

"The prince will come in good time," said Mr. Rossiter, looking at me instead of the storm. "But where's the fairy godmother?"

I know I blushed furiously, I was so conscious of my shabby dress.

"I suppose you see the need of one in my appearance, Mr. Rossiter?" I said, pettishly. "My godmother is ugly enough to be a witch, and rich enough to work all sorts of magical things; but she has given me up. In fact, she has never tried the power of her fairy wand on us."

And I began to think of the dainty ladies Mr. Rossiter had probably been accustomed to visit, with their delicately-tinted kid-gloves, their laces like hoar-frost, their glistening silks, or floating lawns, till I wished to sink into the earth—fool that I had been to go into the vestry, where he could contemplate me at leisure!

"You have something that neither witch nor fairy could give you in these degenerate times."

I looked at him without speaking.

"You are too modest, or too conscious, to ask what," he went on. "Well, it is the most dangerous gift of beauty, and a nameless charm, which is better than beauty."

"I think the rain is stopping," I said, looking out steadily where it was falling fast and furiously. "I had better try to go, Mr. Rossiter."

"Oh, impossible!"

"But I must!" I cried, opening the door.

"Then, I must also," he answered, holding his umbrella over me, and mercilessly exposing himself. "Do you come here every day?"

"Not every day. I'm not miserable and desperate every day; sometimes I am hopeful, and dream of better things."

"Of the prince, for instance?"

"Or the fairy godmother," I answered, for there had been moments when I had wildly dreamed of some wonderful change in my circumstances through her means.

Over us the black sky seemed to lean down heavily; around us fell the rain, surrounding us like a watery wall. Now and then the lightning kindled the sloppy way, and showed me a rivulet of rain-drops running down Mr. Rossiter's nose, and shining streams from his hair. He would have made quite a respectable shower if he had shaken himself. And I saw how handsome he was in that lurid light, or any light.

"I know your father slightly," he said, as we neared the house; "so expect me soon."

A delight, sudden and keen as the lightning, smote me at his words; then a pang—we had reached the front-door.

"Oh, my beans!" I cried, looking back at the blinding rain. "Do you know, Mr. Rossiter, I entirely forgot my duty."

"In pleasure, I hope," he answered, laughing, and showing a handsome mouth. "You must leave the beans to their fate."

And he bowed, and I left the storm without to face the storm within.

Lily and Rose were peeping through the windows. Sweet flowerets, I knew well they both had thorns. My stepmother was setting the table for tea—doing my work, and therefore doing it savagely. My

dad was not there; kept at his office by the storm, I suppose.

"Well, Cinder, two hours—two mortal hours you've bin over them beans!" began my stepmother, sharp as an easterly wind.

"Lor', beans, indeed!" snapped Lily. "She's bin a-walkin' with her beau!"

"Where did he come from?" asked my stepmother.

"Rained down," tittered Rose.

"What on airth have you done with the beans?" screamed my stepmother, for the first time realizing that I had nothing in my hand.

"Forgotten them," I answered, as nonchalantly as I could. "The storm was enough to make one forget anything."

"Oh, indeed! You won't forget to eat your allowance, if you are so wasteful and extravagant," answered my stepmother; "traipsin' around with young men instead of doin' your own work."

"And forgetting all unbinnary things in her delight," finished up Rose.

"Come, now, explain," said my stepmother. "You are dripping like a mermaid."

"Then, perhaps you will allow me to change my dress," I answered, seeing that the girls were dying with curiosity, and I ran up-stairs to my room without another word.

The first thing I did was to look in the bit of a glass that hung there. I seemed to feel a new interest and curiosity about my face. "A beauty," he had said; but, then, "men were deceivers ever;" so the old song ran. I studied the shy-looking brown eyes, and smoothed back the mop of brown hair. How red my lips were, and part of the blush was in my cheeks yet, I was sure. I had gone out pale enough.

"Poor little Cinderella!" I said to myself, with a beating heart, "has the prince come?"

I was glad to see my father at the table when I went down; so no more questions were asked, and the dear old dad did not understand the sly allusions which stung me like gnats. Rose and Lily were large, fair, sleepy-looking girls, so people thought them amiable, my father among the rest.

The next day I went about in a sort of happy dream, from which I was roused by my stepmother looking into the kitchen.

"Some one to see you," she said, and was gone again.

Of course I did not question. I rushed up-stairs, determined that this time Leonard Rossiter should see me at my best. I tied a blue ribbon over the rebellious curls, I put on a spotless white dress, reserved for evening company, and I felt that I was another being from the crushed and shabby little girl of last night.

I went down with a beating heart, and opened the parlor door. An old woman with a hooked nose, and skin like ancient parchment, sat there. She had keen little forest eyes, which snapped like fire as she looked at me. Of course I knew her, and my heart sank to zero at the sight—my fairy godmother!

"How do you do, Aunty Row?" I said, faltering, and keeping back with difficulty tears of disappointment.

Her name was Rowena Sliggins; but the neighbors called her Aunty Row—the *genius*, Row-de-dow.

"So you're there; kept me waitin'," she snapped.

"Yes; I was at work."

"How's the Banger?"

"Who?"

"The Banger—your stepmother: that's her name, or her patare; you know it."

"Oh, she's well."

"And the two blossoms? Nettles I call 'em."

"They're blooming," I answered, laughing.

"A pretty baby your father was to be taken in so!" she went on, shaking her old head in wrath. "I suppose it's Eden here now?"

"Oh, yes."

"No trail of the serpent—oh, no. Go along; I know all about stepmothers. I'm disgusted with that Banger. Just let me know, child, when I can help you. Mind, I don't say I'll give you anything but advice."

"Thank you," I answered, humbly.

"I haven't given you any yet," she snapped. "Well, now, I've seen you, and you don't look peaked, or starved, or shabby, so I'll go home again. Come and see me. No, I won't call on the Banger. Good-bye," and she was gone.

I had been half an hour dressing for an old woman who stayed three minutes. I did not feel like going to take off my finery at once. It was pleasant to feel that I was looking neat and pretty, so I went out into the garden, to show myself to the scarlet lilies, I suppose.

"They are always in full dress," I thought, and almost envied the lilies, that "toil not, neither do they spin." I began to think how dreary and colorless my own life was—what a work-day world it appeared! A tear or two actually fell on my new blue neck-tie, and that brought me to my senses, I suppose. Whatever wear or tear of feeling I might undergo, the wear and tear of clothing was different; hearts might be rent, but what was that to a rent in one's dress? So, at least, I knew my stepmother would judge, and I began prudently to look after my white dress, when I heard her voice.

"For the land's sake, Cinder, where be you?" and the next moment I saw her face, red with exertion, beaming through the shrubbery. "Wal, I declare to gracious, ef I hain't been a huntin' you high and low! and thar you be, sittin' as cool as a cucumber, in a white dress, in the middle of the afternoon, an' no work done; and Mr. Rossiter's bin here a-keepin' of the gals from helpin'. Do hurry right in, for there's a heap of chores."

Mr. Rossiter! The name struck fire through my veins, and I think I must have vied with the scarlet lilies in color. Then I grew angry with myself, to find myself blushing about a man whom I had met first yesterday. Had he not inquired for me? I wondered, but did not ask. Had any one sought for me? Was he gone yet? I said nothing, but walked silently into the house.

I soon saw that he was gone, and the two sisters, being in a sweetly amiable mood, were lively and loquacious.

"You didn't say it was Mr. Rossiter you had with you yesterday," began Rose, who was naturally the thorniest; "but he told us about it; said he thought you was a ghost, seeing you in the graveyard; but then you put on a great flapping straw-hat, and he knew you wasn't a ghost."

"How handsome he looked!" sighed Lily. "And did you notice when I showed him that little photograph he gave me before he went away?"

"Of course I did," answered Rose, with a rare self-abnegation. "I always said he was smitten before he went, and wondered he didn't come out boldly and say so; but I suppose he thought he'd like to look around in Europe a bit."

"Have you known him long?" I asked, as indifferently as possible.

"Oh, ages!"

I looked at Lily with a more critical eye than ever before. She was, as I have said, a fine-looking woman, with a creamy complexion, cold, sleepy blue eyes, and plenty of pale-yellow hair. She wore a buff lawn, which fitted her luxuriant figure very well, and the spray of scarlet geranium in her hair, and coral ear-rings in her ears, were very becoming to her. I did not overlook a single charm, and felt the difference between this large, fair woman and the slight girl with a flushed face and faded dress, whose heart had been set beating by a few feminine words from Leonard Rossiter.

I had mixed so little in society, where "In order that things may go *toujours tranquille* People seldom express themselves *quite* as they feel," that I was really in such imbecile state of credulity as to believe

"That one or two are almost what they seem;
That virtue is no lie, and happiness no dream."

"If I were you, Lily, I'd be married in white silk, and have a wedding. As for these travelling-dress weddings, I hate 'em."

"Don't you think you are a little premature?" asked Lily, with a sleepy smile.

I hurried up to my room and tore off the white dress and my poor little finery with angry haste, and then began work with an energy that surprised and softened my stepmother. I wanted to work off all troublesome thoughts and memories, and I succeeded in exhausting myself, so that rest was sweet. I deceived myself as the days went on with the belief that I was content; but when I met Mr. Rossiter suddenly in one of the shadowy streets of our village, I found that I had not forgotten him.

"Well met, Miss Lucinda," he said. "Do you live in an enchanted castle guarded by a dragon? I have called three times, now, without seeing you."

"Or inquiring for me," I answered.

"Certainly, I inquired for you," he answered. "Where do you keep yourself?"

"Where did Cinderella keep herself?" I asked, petulantly.

"Oh, very well; I make my next call at the kitchen-door," he answered, laughing.

We took a long walk together, I having an errand to do, and he choosing to accompany me; and, half in an angry mood with the dragon who guarded me, and half from the pleasure I had felt, I promised to take more such walks—in fact, to meet him the very next day, if possible.

So, day by day, the sweet dream stole into my heart, till I was awakened suddenly by dear old dad. He came out into the garden, and I saw a solemn look on his face.

"My child," he said, "you were left without a mother so young, and, I am afraid, I have forgotten my duty."

My heart bounded at this preface, and I was glad to stoop over the rose-bush I was tying up.

"It is not maidenly, my daughter, to meet a gentleman daily at appointed places—an honorable man would seek you at your father's house."

"But if he seeks me there and is not allowed to see me," I cried, with cheeks aflame—"if I am a common drudge, and am always excused lest the household drudgery should not be performed, and am so wretchedly dressed that I am glad to be excused, what then? You said you were thinking of my good when you brought this woman and her two daughters here to spoil our home. Do you ever think of it now? Do you know how my life is stripped of all a girl's pleasures—a girl's innocent enjoyments?"

"Oh, my darling!" my father said, and then I saw that he could not speak, and that there were tears in his eyes.

How I hated myself for my cruel words! How I threw my arms about his neck, and begged his forgiveness, and said I was happy—happier than I deserved, if he only loved me the same; and I promised never to meet that person again, or to give the most malicious a pretext for gossip.

And when I saw the smile come back to my dear old dad's face, I went up to my room, and cried as if my heart would break, for the walks and talks with Mr. Rossiter had made sunshine in the shady place of my life.

How aimless the days seemed! There was nothing to expect. Mr. Rossiter did not come to the house, and I saw that Lily was growing irritated. But one morning I found both the girls in great glee. They held bits of paper in their hands, and were in an animated discussion, and very kind to me, which looked ominous.

"I shall wear water-lilies," said Lily.

"Too colorless," answered Rose. "Cinder, dear, won't you help me to-day with the flounces of my pink gauze?"

"Certainly," I answered.

"And, oh," cried Lily, "won't you, like a love, just put the lace on my fichu? I always say you have real Parisian taste. I shall have my whole dress to make, mamma says, if she gives us new dresses. It's all she can do. We must make them ourselves."

"Where is the party?" I asked, for I saw that a party must be on the *tapis* somewhere in the neighborhood.

"Oh, Mr. Rossiter's," cried Lily, with a self-conscious look. "Here are the invitations."

I grasped them eagerly, with a pang at my heart. Ah! I was invited—no one had seen fit to tell me—I was invited! Then I should see him again. The days when I had not seen him had seemed so everlasting that I had begun to fear that never any more in this world should I see him again.

"I wonder what *I* shall wear," I said, with a glance, in my mind's eye, at my miserable wardrobe.

"Oh!" exclaimed both the sisters, with a peculiar intonation, then did not pursue the subject farther.

I understood the position at once. I was not expected to go to this party, and I was expected, like the Cinderella of old, to deck my two sisters in festive attire, and then to go and sit in the ashes if I pleased. I made one effort to stem the tide of relentless fate.

"Dad," I said, when I had followed him out from breakfast, "are you very poor now?"

"Poorer than a church mouse," he answered, sadly.

"No money to waste in riotous living?"

"Not a cent. What is it?" he asked.

"Never mind, dear."

I would not bear to give him the pain of [illegible] I renounced the party in my own heart from that moment.

Afterward, if he thought of it at all, perhaps he thought I did not care to go to that house so soon after ill-natured gossips had been busy with our names. Poor dear old dad! I tried not to show him how miserable I was amid all the preparations for the fête. I was kitchen-maid and lady's maid in one. I knotted ribbons, I put on flounces, I sewed until I could scarcely see, and all the time my heart ached with a ceaseless pain.

"How do I look, dear?" said Lily to Rose.

"Oh, sweet," returned Rose, regarding herself steadily in the glass. "And how do I look, dear?"

"Oh, lovely," returned Lily, adjusting her white gloves.

Lily did look extremely well, like a sea-nymph, in a dress of pale-green tissue, with pond-lilies in her pale-yellow hair and at her white throat; I saw her charms with a pang, and turned away, sick with envy. She was going in her beautiful dress to spend her evening among flowers, and lights, and music; she would see him, while I—well, I did not wait long before knowing what duty awaited me.

"Come, Cinder," cried my stepmother, "jest run down into the kitchen, and peel them pumpkins for the pies; your pa is so fond of pumpkin-pies, and I hadn't a mite of time this blessed day."

It was early yet in the evening. The girls were consulting the old clock, eager to go, yet not daring to be unfashionable by being too soon, and fearful of sitting down lest they should crush the multitudinous flounces.

I opened the door of the kitchen, for I felt stifled in the hot air. I saw a strange object at the garden-gate. As I walked nearer, I discovered a very dirty pair of bare feet looking over the top of the gate, while the head belonging to the same rested on the pavement; in short, it was a boy standing on his head. He turned a somersault as I drew near, and I saw he held a note in his mouth, having his hands and feet employed in other ways.

"He sent that here, an' I've been a-waiting 'bout half an hour," said the boy.

I took the note, supposing it concerned some business of my father's, but by the kitchen light I read my own name on it.

"My precious love," so it ran, "I have gone to our trysting-place day by day without seeing you, till I am growing melancholy mad. What has happened? I have found life stale, profitless and unpalatable without you. Have you wearied of me? Do you care for me a little? Give me some hope by wearing a rose in your hair to-night—a blush rose like that you gave me one happy day. I shall take it for a sign that you care for me. If you do not, I am off in the first steamer. Yours ever,

"LEONARD ROSSITER."

Ah! that was like drinking strong wine. I felt the warmth begin at my heart and kindle all my veins to fire; then a chill crept stealthily over me. I could not go; I could not answer his love in any way. He would not understand; he would look for me in the "rose-bud garden of girls," and not seeing me, might be lost to me forever. I could not look forward; it seemed that my fate awaited me this night. The fairy prince had come; the ball was ready; the cruel sisters were gone, and Cinderella sat in the kitchen by the pumpkin, which showed no signs of turning into a coach; I began to make preparation for turning it into pies instead, dropping, I fear, some tears on the golden rind.

"What, in the kitchen!" said a shrill voice. "I have come to take my god-daughter to the party, and you tell me she's in the kitchen! Well, that is cool, even for a Banger, as you are."

And the door was literally burst open, and the angry apparition of my godmother appeared, leaning on a great gold-headed stick; behind her appeared my stepmother's face, more flushed than usual.

"This person has impertinently forced herself in here," she said, forgetting her usual respect for wealth in her anger.

"Yes, I'm going to the party," said my godmother, not noticing. "Dare say you didn't remember I was one of the lambs of the flock. Tough old lamb, you think; never mind. How do you like my style?"

She wore an old brocade, which looked like a chintz window-curtain, and a huge yellow satin bonnet with a white lace veil. I did think she was the greatest old guy I had ever seen.

"I've come for you in state," she cried; "carriage-and-pair at the door. Throw the pumpkins to the pigs, child, and make haste."

"Oh, Aunty Row," I exclaimed. "I've just been longing to go, but I've nothing to wear."

"Indeed! Then I say it's a shame for that Banger, and I don't see how she dares to show that red face. It's my private opinion she drinks."

At these words, my stepmother disappeared in a tumult of rage, and I gasped out—

"Oh, do not say such dreadful things!"

"Oh, go 'long! If she was a kind-hearted drunkard, she'd be a heap better than she is. Come, there's no time to lose. I dare say I can find you something to wear. Throw the pumpkin to the pigs, I say."

So, in less time than I can tell it, poor Cinderella found her pumpkin actually changed into a coach, in which she sat whirling away to her godmother's house.

I had not been there in years, and the solid splendor of it surprised me. We hurried through the lighted rooms to an old ebony cabinet, at which my godmother fumbled awhile.

"I could give you a brocade like mine, if you like," she said.

I saw myself in the frightful costume, and shuddered, silently.

"My wedding-dress," she exclaimed, pathetically, after a moment.

"Why, were you married?" I asked.

"Never, child. I was to have been; the clothes all ready—this dress and veil sent from Paris; then God saw fit to take my darling and leave me to walk life's ways alone. This will do, I think."

The creamy, glistening folds of satin shimmered in the light; a veil of exquisite point lace lay over it. I believe I had some of the Parisian taste for which my sisters gave me credit when they needed my services; I saw the capabilities of the thing at once.

"Oh, these will be lovely!" I cried. "You are too kind, Auntie Row."

The dress was not so old-fashioned, after all, because the old fashions have become new. I looped the delicate lace over the satin with some primrose sprays which were there, and made it bouffante enough for the present mode; then there was plenty of rich old lace for the neck.

I declare, I hardly knew myself when I saw my face and form in the great mirror.

"Oh, Cinderella," I thought, "you are very fine now, but do not forget that you must go back and sit in the ashes to-morrow."

And, like the king of old who chose to have the remembrance of his mortality to haunt his feasts, this skeleton sat at mine. One moment of pure, unalloyed joy I had, however. I was only mortal, and it was a pleasure to see the wonder, startled surprise and spite, all struggling with one another in the faces of my sisters as I entered the rooms.

But I am anticipating. I stood, full dressed, as I said, before the mirror, my godmother flattering about me like a great moth, if any of that species ever have wings like ancient chintz.

There were tears in her eyes, too, for she was looking, as it were, at the ghost of her dead hopes.

"Ah, child," she said, "I expected to be very happy in that dress. Never mind; it makes you happy now, and that is even better. I think I shall [illegible] the sight [illegible] up my [illegible]

"Have [illegible] Row?" I [illegible] she must [illegible]

"A [illegible] don't see [illegible] Come, [illegible] "Oh, [illegible] real sat[illegible] me. "Ha[illegible] she exclaimed. I gave [illegible] the end [illegible] to a flower [illegible] dow. Ye[illegible] leaped at [illegible] faintest [illegible] I put it [illegible] wondered [illegible] "under [illegible] I do [illegible] dance [illegible] dance wh[illegible] Mr. Lea[illegible] sister's [illegible]

"Why, [illegible] Lily ex[illegible]

"Then [illegible] mine," L[illegible] "She ha[illegible] The Le[illegible] show her [illegible]

"I hav[illegible] church," [illegible] before."

Leonar[illegible] which no[illegible] godmothe[illegible] carrying [illegible] all the te[illegible] magic wa[illegible]

quisite things—robes, and laces, and jewels—and the name of the wand was *gold*.

So this modern Cinderella was rescued from her seat in the ashes, and married the fairy prince, and her dear old dad warms his heart and his hands oftener at her household fire than at his own.—*Leslie's Lady's Magazine.*

MRS. VAVASOUR'S DIAMOND.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,
BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

"I hate her!"

The speaker was a beautiful woman. She was standing in the shadowy corner of the hall, and looking into a room whose door was partially open, and from which the sound of a clear, sweet voice came floating in the words of some old song, accompanied by the vibrant melody of a piano touched deftly and softly.

"I hate her!"

The woman's face was full of dark thoughts. She was like a tiger, just then, which sees its prey, but cannot spring upon it.

What she saw was a man standing at the piano; a tall, handsome fellow, with a fair, Saxon face, and blonde hair and beard; and seated at the instrument was a girl with a slight, supple figure, and the prettiest of wild-rose faces, with a flood of brown hair falling over neck and shoulders in a rippling flow, held back from the clear face by a blue ribbon. The girl was singing, and the man was watching her with a tender light in his blue eyes.

"How I would like to be her mistress," hissed Katharine Vere, as she stood there in the shadow and watched the pretty picture. Only she could not appreciate the beauty which other and less jealous eyes might have been able to see.

Miss Vere had come to Vavasour Place on purpose to ensnare and marry Bernard Vavasour.

She had heard much of the handsome young heir of the Vavasour estates, and had formed a very favorable opinion of him before she met him. He was clever, cultivated, and rich. When she met him, she resolved at once to make a final conquest, and crown a long series of triumphs by securing the most eligible catch of the season.

So when Mrs. John Vavasour, who was wife to Bernard's cousin, and who came down to Vavasour Place every Summer, to do the honors, invited her to spend the Summer there, Katharine Vere was ready to accept. And determined on victory, Miss Vere entered vigorously on the campaign, and proceeded to lay siege to Bernard Vavasour's heart at once.

And there at Vavasour Place, Miss Vere met the woman she hated in the person of Rose Grayle. She was governess to Mrs. John Vavasour's two children; a shy, sweet girl with the prettiest face imaginable, and a modest, refined manner that stamped her at once as a real lady.

For Rose Grayle stood between Miss Vere and the man she wanted to marry. If she had chosen to exert the power she held over him, Rose Grayle could have kept Bernard Vavasour at her side, and Miss Vere's skilful manœuvres to secure his attention would have proved failures. But she did not choose to exert that power. She made no effort to keep him by her. She treated him with a grave, sweet courtesy, and accepted the attentions which he gave her as any other lady might have done.

Miss Vere saw that Rose had only to say the word and Bernard Vavasour was her most loyal subject. She saw too, that she had a pride that was strong and deep, and managed, by a skilful tact which she possessed, to keep the girl reminded of the difference between her station and that in which Bernard Vavasour moved. Consequently Miss Grayle wore a sort of reserve which served to keep Mr. Vavasour "from going too far," as Miss Vere congratulated herself.

Sometimes Miss Vere fancied she was gaining ground on the field, and then a word or a look from Miss Grayle would put her in distrust of the advantage she thought to have gained. So easy it was for the girl to defeat her plan utterly, if she chose to do so.

And that was why Miss Vere hated Miss Grayle.

And so, in alternate hope of success, and consciousness of slow, if any progress, the weeks slipped by, and at last Miss Vere resolved on a little strategy, on the principle, I suppose, that "all is fair in love and war."

One day Mrs. Vavasour discovered that a valuable diamond ring was missing.

"Where did you have it last?" asked her husband.

"I took it off last night and laid it in this box," pointing to a curious little carved trifle on the dressing-case.

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, very sure," answered Mrs. Vavasour.

"Who has been in the room since?" asked her husband.

"No one with the exception of yourself," was the reply. "Or—yes, Miss Grayle did come up after a book. I sent her for it last evening."

"Of course Miss Grayle had nothing to do with its disappearance," said Mr. Vavasour.

"Of course not," said his wife, decidedly. "I never thought of suspecting her. I've searched the room over twice thoroughly. I have moved everything. It isn't here."

Mr. Vavasour assisted in a third search. The ring was nowhere to be found.

"Some of the servants must have taken it," said he.

"I don't know who to suspect," said his wife. "Let's go down and talk with Bernard about it."

[illegible] Vere was in the parlor with Bernard [illegible]. Mrs. Vavasour related the story [illegible], and asked what to do.

"[illegible] our rooms," suggested Miss Vere. "[illegible]ling to have mine looked over."

"[illegible]'s no use of that," said Bernard. "[illegible]se none of our guests have taken [illegible]

"[illegible] would hardly be fair to search the [illegible] rooms, and let ours go unsearched," [illegible]ted Miss Vere. "I desire to have [illegible] through mine."

"[illegible] other guests announced their will[illegible]o have their rooms investigated.

"[illegible], we can go through with the care[illegible]looking them over," said Mr. Vavasour. "Of course there isn't the least bit [illegible] it. We'll begin with your room, [illegible]yle, if you've no objection."

"[illegible] at all," answered Miss Grayle, and [illegible]repaired to the governess's room. [illegible]'s face wore a look of coming [illegible]

[illegible] wore a strange, baffled expression. [illegible] Vavasour announced laughingly [illegible]ing was to be found of the ring in [illegible]ple's room. Miss Vere's eyes had a [illegible] look in them. She admitted her [illegible]ther nervousness as some of them [illegible]ated Miss Grayle on being proved [illegible]as if she would have liked to [illegible]er.

"[illegible] Vere's room next," said Mr. Vavasour, [illegible]led the way thither.

[illegible] thing opened was a little case of [illegible]nd as Mr. Vavasour drew them [illegible]fter another, the sunlight glinted [illegible]re's jewels.

"[illegible] see anything of the ring," answered Mr. Vavasour. But as he spoke, [illegible]ner of the last drawer something [illegible] half wrapped up in a piece of old [illegible] fell to the floor. In falling, the [illegible] shaken off, and there on the carpet, flashing and gleaming in the sunshine, lay Mrs. Vavasour's diamond ring.

Miss Vere turned pale as death. She staggered and sank into a chair.

"Before God, I know no more than you do how that ring came here," she said.

"*I* do!" spoke up Bertha, Mr. Vavasour's six-year-old girl.

"How?" asked Mrs. Vavasour.

"*I* put it there," answered Bertha. "Last night Bobby an' me was a-playin' in the nurs'ry, an' I was a hidin' from him. I came out in the hall an' hid behind the door. While I was hid I see Miss Vere come out of her room and go into your'n, an' she took the ring an' I see her go into Miss Grayle's room. I followed her an' see her put it in Miss Grayle's trunk. Then I heard her say she'd see what Uncle Bernard 'ud think of her when they found the ring there. Then she went out, an' didn't see me at all. When she was gone, I went into Miss Grayle's room, an' I opened the trunk an' took out the ring an' put it in Miss Vere's drawer. I knew she wanted to make folks think Miss Grayle stole it, 'cause she hates Miss Grayle, 'cause Uncle Bernard likes her."

"Is this true, Bertha?" questioned Mrs. Vavasour.

"Just as true as can be," answered the child, meeting her mother's eyes unflinchingly. "I put the ring in her drawer, 'cause she stole it, an' I don't like her. She said I was a ugly young 'un t'other day, and she'd like to cuff my ears, jest 'cause I trod on her dress. I don't want Uncle Bernard to marry her. I want him to marry Miss Grayle, an' then she'll be my Auntie Rose, won't she Uncle Bernard?"

"I hope so," answered Bernard, and smiled at Rose, who was blushing up redder than any June rose could.

So ended Miss Vere's campaign in ignominious utter defeat. The only course left for her was to withdraw quietly from the field, which she did.

A week after her surrender she received the wedding-cards of Bernard Vavasour and Rose Grayle.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ A legitimate inference—That a dentist's office is a drawing-room.

☞ Hudson has a young lady who is practising preparatory to making her *début* as a vocalist. The Star speaks of the circumstance, and adds: "Those who live in her neighborhood have put weather-strips around their doors and windows to keep out the melody."

☞ "I want to know," said a creditor, fiercely, "when you are going to pay me what you owe me?" "When I'm going to pay you? Why, you're a pretty fellow! Do you take me for a prophet?"

☞ A youthful stranger at Omaha fell in love at first sight with a photograph exhibited as a specimen in an outside showcase, about six weeks ago, went up-stairs and inquired the name of the fair original, procured an introduction to her, called upon and courted her, and now, come Christmas, will marry her.

☞ A Western paper says that "Rare Ben Jackson" is buried in Westminster Abbey.

☞ Danbury has a few men who are never behind in case of emergency. The morning after the epizootic revealed itself there, one of them appeared at his doctor's office with eleven cans of horse-radish which he wanted vaccinated.

☞ Bridge notices are sometimes very funny. One in New Hampshire says: "No one is allowed to pass over this bridge faster than A. Walk." As A. Walk's velocity is not stated, the injunction becomes a puzzle.

☞ The Courier-Journal says: "Louisville should take warning by the fate of Boston and Chicago. Every good citizen will now put a barrel of gunpowder under his building, and be prepared for emergencies. The fact that a building amply provided with powder goes up quicker the second time than it did the first is well known among architects."

☞ The whisky shops in some parts of the country, wearied of hearing themselves called saloons and sample rooms, have taken a literary turn, and are now known as reading-rooms.

"I will not strike thee, bad man," said a Quaker, one day, "but I will let this billet of wood fall on thee;" and at the precise moment the "bad man" was floored by the weight of a walking stick the Quaker was known to carry.

☞ A man in Pine Island, Michigan, whose wife died a short time since, refuses to eat and drink for days at a time, and sleeps in a sheet-iron box, where he says he can commune with the spirit.

☞ The Kentucky papers are contradicting the report that Daniel Boone could not write. The impression probably gained circulation from the fact that he made "his mark" in the world.

A Glorious Record.—Twelve years ago a few modest lines in a New York journal invited public attention to a new Vegetable Restorative, and solicited a trial of its merits as a remedy for indigestion, biliousness, fever and ague, debility, nervous disorders, rheumatism, and all complaints requiring invigorating and regulating treatment. In this quiet, unpretentious way, PLANTATION BITTERS was introduced to the world. It was a success from the beginning. All that was claimed for it as a tonic, a corrective and antidote to malarious fever, was found to be strictly true. Within five years the annual sales of this article amounted to over *One Million of Bottles*. A few years more and the demand had swelled to *five millions*. The annual consumption of the Bitters has now reached the almost incredible aggregate of SIX MILLIONS OF BOTTLES, and for every bottle sold a copy of the ILLUSTRATED MEDICAL ANNUAL, published by the proprietors, at a cost of $150,000, is given away.

☞ We understand that a distinguished editor, living in a Hudson River city, is about purchasing a bugle for the purpose of getting up military notes.

☞ We clip the following from the Troy (N. Y.) Whig:—

Some three months since Dr. R. V. Pierce, of Buffalo, N. Y., commenced advertising in the Whig, an article called "Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy." We believed at that time it was one of the many catchpenny arrangements to swindle people out of their money, but during the past few weeks have become convinced to the contrary. We know of several prominent citizens who have suffered from that loathsome disease, "Catarrh," and they pronounce Dr. Sage's Remedy no humbug, and in several instances have been entirely cured. We desire to give Dr. Pierce the benefit of the same. 598.

☞ "Debut" and "Yours" are the names of two stations on the new section of the Inter Colonial Railway.

WEBSTER ON A BRIDGE.—We do not believe that so much benefit can be derived from the same amount of money in any other way as by purchasing a Webster's Unabridged Dictionary. Is a person at fault about the application of any particular word, or of the way it should be used, and he different meanings, he has but to look in his Unabridged, and he will find examples of all. Everything that can be illustrated by figures or diagrams is so illustrated, (by the 3000 illustrations.) It a perfect cyclopedia, and we would advise any one who has no "Webster on a bridge," as Mrs. Partington has it, to do without an extra coat or dress and get one—they will never regret it.—*Hub. Advertiser.* 1t

"Woman as a Wife and Mother," by Henry Chavasse, M.D., the celebrated English Physician, a book which answers questions which a wife and mother is not always willing to submit to her family physician. 800 pages, with illustrations, sent post-paid on receipt of price, $2.50, by the publishers.

WM. H. EVANS & CO.,
nov14-cow3t 748 Sansom st., Philada.

DR. RADWAY'S

Sarsaparillian Resolvent,

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FOR THE CURE OF ALL

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KIDNEY, BLADDER, AND LIVER

COMPLAINTS, DYSPEPSIA,

AFFECTIONS OF THE LUNGS AND THROAT;

PURIFIES THE BLOOD,

RESTORING HEALTH AND VIGOR;

CLEAR SKIN AND BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXION

SECURED TO ALL.

Sold by Druggists. Price $1 per Bottle.

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PERFECT PURGATIVE PILLS.

Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated, for the cure of all disorders of the stomach, liver, bowels, kidneys, bladder, nervous diseases, headache, constipation, costiveness, indigestion, dyspepsia, biliousness, bilious fever, inflammation of the bowels, piles, and all derangements of the internal viscera. Warranted to effect a positive cure.

Price 25 cents per box. Sold by Druggists.

DR. RADWAY & CO., 32 Warren St.,
nov2-4t New York.

A CARD.

To all who are suffering from the errors and indiscretions of youth, nervous weakness, early decay, loss of manhood, &c., I will send a recipe that will cure you, *free of charge*. This noble remedy was discovered by a missionary in South America. Send a self-addressed envelope to the Rev. JOSEPH T. INMAN, Station D., New York City. oct12-1y

PROSPECTUS FOR 1873.

THE LADY'S FRIEND.

BEAUTIFUL NEW PREMIUM CHROMO.

The proprietors of this "Queen of the Monthlies" call the attention of the ladies to their Magazine, as being just what a Lady's Magazine should be. Edited by a Lady, nothing but what is of the most refined and elevating character ever is admitted to its pages. Its Engravings, its Fashions, its Stories all bear evidence of the same refined and cultivated taste, which has endeared it to thousands of readers.

It will continue to publish Serials, Short Stories, Poetry, &c., from its old list of talented contributors. Among the Serials we may announce:—

THE MASTER OF GREYLANDS.
By Mrs. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "Lady Andlemlan's Trial," etc.

UNA AND HER PRINCE.
By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "Una and Her Lions," etc.

A GIRL'S ROMANCE.
By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Queen Coquette," etc.

A NOVELET.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "An Everyday Heroine," etc.

A NOVELET.
By Miss FANNIE HODGSON, author of "Kathleen's Love Story," "Rosburn," etc. [Miss Hodgson's Novelet will run through the whole year.]

FASHIONS, FANCY WORK, ETC.

Fine Engravings of the Fashions will represent the latest styles in Dresses, Cloaks, Bonnets, Hats, Headdresses, Fancy Work, Embroidery, &c.

BEAUTIFUL ENGRAVINGS.

The Engravings of THE LADY'S FRIEND are of a very superior character, embracing pictures of subjects which touch the sentiments and affections. These choice and elegant Engravings are a special feature of this Magazine, and should entitle it to the preference over all others.

MUSIC.

A piece of the latest and most popular Music accompanies every number. The Music is of itself worth double the price of the Magazine.

SPLENDID PREMIUMS

Sewing Machines, Plated Ware, Gold Chains, &c.

Those desiring to get up Lists of subscribers to the Lady's Friend, will be well compensated. The list of Premiums is the same as for the Post.

"LITTLE SAMUEL."

A beautiful Scriptural Chromo of the Child-Prophet Samuel, starting up from his sleep at the call of the Lord, and which has all the rich and glowing colors of a fine oil painting—will be sent to the getter-up of every club, and, *under special rates*, to every subscriber. This Chromo is copyrighted, and the regular price of it is Five Dollars. It cannot be obtained for less than that price, except in connection with "The Lady's Friend," or "The Saturday Evening Post." It is twelve by fifteen inches in size.

TERMS—With the Chromo—Always in Advance.

One copy of The Lady's Friend, and one copy of the Chromo of "Little Samuel,"	$2.50
One copy of the Lady's Friend, one of "The Saturday Evening Post," and one Chromo of "Little Samuel,"	5.00
Four copies of the Lady's Friend and four Chromos (and one Chromo gratis),	6.00
Eight copies of The Lady's Friend, and eight Chromos, (and one copy each of the Magazine and Chromo gratis, for the sender of the club),	16.00
Additional subscribers may be added to the above clubs at	2.00

☞ These clubs can be made up of THE LADY'S FRIEND and "THE SATURDAY EVENING POST" conjointly, if 50 cents is added for each number of THE POST taken.

TERMS—Without the Chromo—Always in Advance.

Without the Chromo, we will send the Magazine at the old rates. One copy for $2.00. Four copies for $6.00. Eight copies (and one gratis to the sender of the Club) for $12.00. All additional at $1.50. Copies of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST can be taken in these Clubs at $2.00 apiece, which is now THE POST'S lowest Club price. The Chromo of "Little Samuel" will be sent to the *sender* of each Club, as a special reward for his or her trouble; and to each club-subscriber for one dollar extra.

One copy of THE LADY'S FRIEND ($2.00) and one of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST ($3.00) for $4.00.

OUR STEEL ENGRAVINGS.—Any one entitled a Chromo, may take in its place, if he so desires, a copy of either of our handsome Steel Engravings, "The Sisters," "One of Life's Happy Hours," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon."

☞ Those desirous of getting up a Club, or a Premium List, shall have a copy of the Magazine sent to them gratis. They would also find it advisable to remit one dollar, for which we will send a copy of the Chromo of "Little Samuel" in addition. They must state expressly, however, that they wish the Chromo for this purpose, or else it will not be furnished. If the Chromo gets seriously injured in canvassing for subscribers another will be sent to replace it.

☞ The contents of THE LADY'S FRIEND and of THE POST will always be entirely different.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twelve cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks, *payable to our order*.

☞ Ten cents should be forwarded in *all cases*, to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo.

Address DEACON & PETERSON,
319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

Single numbers of THE LADY'S FRIEND, 20 cents.

THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, NOV. 30, 1872.

TERMS---Always in Advance.

"LITTLE SAMUEL."

A beautiful Scriptural Chromo of the Child-Prophet Samuel, starting up from his sleep at the call of the Lord, will be sent as a Premium to every single ($3.00) subscriber, who sends on ten cents to pay the expense of mailing, &c. It will also be sent to the getter-up of every Club.

RATES:

Single copy, $3.00 a year, payable in advance, not including postage, which is twenty cents a year, and payable at the office where the paper is received. Every single ($3.00) subscriber will be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, "LITTLE SAMUEL," or to either of our large and beautiful Premium Steel Engravings—"The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," "One of Life's Happy Hours," or "Washington at Mount Vernon." [Ten cents must always be remitted to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo or Engraving.]

One copy of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST ($3.00) and One of THE LADY'S FRIEND ($2.00) for $4.50. Or, if the Premium Chromo or an Engraving is desired in addition, $5.10.

TO THOSE WHO DESIRE TO GET UP CLUBS.

If you wish to get up a club for THE POST, send us your name, and we will forward you, *free of charge*, a number of specimen copies of the paper, so that, with them, you can give your neighborhood a good canvassing.

TERMS OF CLUBS. For $3.00 we will send four copies of THE POST for one year to one address, or each copy to a separate address. The person sending the Club shall be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, or to either of our beautiful Premium Steel Engravings, "The Sisters," "One of Life's Happy Hours," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon."

For $16 we will send eight copies to one address, or each copy to a separate address. The person sending this Club shall be entitled to a copy *free*, and to a copy also of the Premium Chromo, or to either of our Premium engravings.

The senders of Clubs can afterwards add single copies at $2.00 each.

Any club-subscriber wishing the Chromo or an Engraving must remit *one dollar extra*.

The above Clubs may be composed partly of THE POST and partly of THE LADY'S FRIEND, if desired. The subscriptions to The Lady's Friend can be taken at $1.50 apiece, instead of $2.00. Thus four copies of THE POST, and four of THE LADY'S FRIEND will be sent for $14, and in the same proportion all through.

Special offers to those who wish to make up premium lists, will be found under that head.

CLUBS OR LISTS WITH CHROMO. Those desirous of getting up clubs with the Chromo, or Premium Lists, should remit one dollar, for which we will send them a copy of the Chromo. When the Club or List is forwarded, in case the Chromo has been injured in canvassing for subscribers, another will be sent to replace it.

☞ No deviation allowed from our regular terms. If less money is sent, the paper will be sent for a proportionate period.

WE WILL SEND YOU ANY NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE YOU WISH, IN CONNECTION WITH THE POST, AT A REDUCED PRICE—as follows: Any Paper or Magazine the regular price of which is $1.00 at 87 cts.; regular price $2.00 at $1.75; regular price $2.50 at $2.25; regular price $3.00 at $2.62; regular price $4.00 at $3.50; regular price $5.00 at $4.50.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twenty cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ When additions are made to clubs, the new subscriptions must begin and end at the same time as the original club.

☞ The contents of THE POST and of THE LADY'S FRIEND will always be entirely different.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks *payable to our order*.

☞ Ten cents should be forwarded, *in all cases*, where subscribers are entitled to and wish the Chromo or an engraving, to pay the expense of mailing.

BE CAREFUL IN OPENING THE WRAPPERS OF THE CHROMO OR ENGRAVINGS. Our subscribers are enjoined to be very careful in opening the wrappers of the Chromo or Engravings when they are received lest they should injure them.

Address **H. PETERSON & Co.,**
No. 319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

SINGLE COPIES 6 Cents.

NOTE.—"PEMBERTON; OR, ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO," will be published by *J. B. Lippincott & Co.*, of this city, in a volume of the usual novel size—though probably rather thicker than usual. It will be bound in cloth, and be ready, it is thought, about the middle of December. Price $1.75.

We will forward it to any one (postage paid) for the above price. Or we will send THE POST for one year, (with the Chromo or an engraving,) and "Pemberton" for $4.50.

ANNOUNCEMENT.

It gives us great pleasure to announce to our readers, particularly the more youthful ones, that in the next number of THE POST (Dec. 7,) we shall begin a novelette of extraordinary interest, entitled,

WERTZAL THE SCOUT;

OR,

THE PHANTOM OF THE BLACK HILLS.

BY CAPTAIN CARNES.

The characters of this author are drawn from the life, and there is a vigor and originality in his narrative which charm the reader. As he himself says to us in sending on the story, "In writing it I have lived over again the scenes herein depicted."

ANOTHER NEW SERIAL.

About the first of January we shall begin a finely written novelette, entitled,

RAVENSWOOD;

OR,

THE RAFTSMEN OF THE DELAWARE.

BY BURR THORNBURY,

Author of "Skale the Scout," "The Tory Brothers," "Agnes Ayre," Etc., Etc.

The scenes are laid in the midst of the wild and romantic country of the upper Delaware, with which section the author is himself intimately acquainted. It is with great satisfaction we offer our readers this spirited story.

OUR SHORT STORIES.

We should also like to call the attention of our readers—though of course they must notice the fact themselves—to the rare beauty and excellence of our sketches, and shorter stories. We know that finer stories than these do not appear in any paper or magazine in this country. They are, in fact, one of the features which have given THE POST the high literary position that it holds, and which attract intelligent and cultivated people to its columns. It is with some pride, we confess, that we ask our readers to compare them for one moment with the crude stuff which passes for stories in some of our contemporaries.

"LITTLE SAMUEL."

Ella Wheeler says in a recent letter:—"Many thanks for the beautiful Chromo sent me recently. It is a perfect gem, and I prize it highly."

☞ Oshkosh, Wis., has an Enoch Arden who, instead of going away quietly like his great original, lingers about the premises, and declares his intention to "make it hot for 'em."

SPLENDID LIST OF PREMIUMS!

[We offer the following splendid list of Premiums, because we wish to increase our subscription list—and therefore mean to pay well those who will aid us in so doing. We prefer this mode to the usual expensive system of advertising.]

Mark! Every Subscriber in a Premium List is entitled to one of our handsome Steel Plate Engravings—"The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," "One of Life's Happy Hours," or "Washington at Mount Vernon," or to the Beautiful Chromo of

"LITTLE SAMUEL;"

representing the Child-Prophet as he is aroused from slumber by the voice of the Lord, (I. Samuel; Chapter I.) This Chromo would be sold in the stores for $3. It is twelve by fifteen inches in size. The lists may be made up conjointly, if desired, of "THE SATURDAY EVENING POST," and "THE LADY'S FRIEND." The subscribers to THE LADY'S FRIEND may be taken at $2.50 instead of $3.00.

For 50	subscribers, at $3	each,	a Silver-plated Tea Set, including Coffee Pot, worth..... $50.00
For 40	"	"	a Lady's solid gold, long Opera Chain—with tassels and handsomely enamelled slides with Pearl settings, worth..... 40.00
For 40	"	"	a Lady's Fine Gold Watch, 18 karat, full jeweled, detached lever, worth 40.00 or, a Grover & Baker's Sewing Machine, worth..... 55.00 or a 6-octave Melodeon, worth..... 60.00
For 30	"	"	a Full Jewelled, Detached Lever, Coin Silver Watch, worth..... 30.00
For 30	"	"	a Novelty Printing Press, worth..... 30.00
For 20	"	"	a Full Jewelled, Detached Lever, Coin Silver watch, worth..... 20.00
For 14	"	"	a Doty's Washing Machine, worth..... 14.00
For 12	"	"	a Silver-plated Cake Basket, worth..... 12.00 or a Silver-plated Ice Pitcher, worth..... 12.00 or a Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, worth..... 12.00
For 10	"	"	a Silver-plated Castor, worth..... 10.00
For 9	"	"	a set of Parlor Billiards, worth..... 6.00 or a Set of Croquet, maple, worth..... 10.00 or a Set of "Le Cercle," (the new field game,) polished maple, worth 10.00 or a Universal Clothes Wringer, worth..... 9.00
For 5	"	"	a Three-quart Ice Cream Freezer, (Packer,) worth..... 4.50
For 4	"	"	a Set of Six Croquet Balls, Tilton's Ebonite, worth..... 4.00
For 4	"	"	a set of Parlor Quoits, worth..... 3.00
For 2	"	"	One copy of "Pemberton; or, One Hundred Years Ago," by H. Peterson; bound in cloth, worth..... 1.75

GOLD PENS AND HOLDERS.

For 5	subscribers at $2	each,	No. 6 Pen, Solid Silver Extension Case, worth..... 4.00
For 6	"	"	Business, or No. 7 Pen, Telescopic Holder, (can be carried safely in vest pocket,) worth..... 4.50

The above Gold Pens are made by E. S. Johnson & Co., New York, and are of unequaled finish, elasticity and durability. They have been sold by first-class dealers for the past twenty years.

PEN AND POCKET KNIVES.

For 3	subscribers at $2	each,	One "Senator" Pocket Knife, 4 blades, Shell Handle, worth,..... 2.50 or Two Pruning Knives, 1 blade, Cocoa Handle, worth, each..... 1.25
For 5	"	"	One "Senator" Pocket Knife, 5 blades, Pearl Handle, Octagon, worth.. 4.00

PATENT HARD RUBBER HANDLE TABLE KNIVES.

For 5	subscribers, at $3	each,	Half-a-dozen Table Knives, Solid Oval Handle, Concave Bolster, Ivory tip, worth..... 4.00
For 4	"	"	Half-a-dozen Dessert Knives, Solid Oval Handle, Ivory tip, worth..... 3.75
For 5	"	"	One Pair Beef and Game Carvers, Ivory tip, worth..... 2.75

HEAVY SILVER PLATED KNIVES.

For 12	subscribers, at $3	each,	Half-a-dozen Silver Plated Table Knives, Heavy Oval Ivory Handles, worth..... 10.00
For 10	"	"	Half-a-dozen Silver Plated Dessert Knives, Heavy Oval Ivory Handles, worth..... 8.00
For 8	"	"	One Pair Carvers, Heavy Oval Superfine Ivory Handle, worth..... 7.00

HEAVILY SILVER PLATED SPOONS AND FORKS.

For 3	subscribers, at $2	each,	One Set Tea Spoons,			Extra Plate,	worth.....	2.25
For 5	"	"	"	"	"	Triple	" "	4.00
For 6	"	"	"	"	Dessert	Extra	" "	4.25
For 8	"	"	"	"	"	Triple	" "	6.50
For 7	"	"	"	"	Table	Extra	" "	5.50
For 10	"	"	"	"	"	Triple	" "	8.25
For 8	"	"	"	"	Forks,	Extra	" "	5.50
For 10	"	"	"	"	"	Triple	" "	8.25
For 4	"	"	A pair of Solid Oval Ivory Handle Butter Knives, Silver Plated, worth					3.00
For 6	"	"	One Child's Set, consisting of Pearl Handle Silver Plated Knife and Fork and Spoon in a fine Morocco Case, worth.....					5.50

☞ The above named goods are made at the celebrated manufactory of the Meriden Cutlery Co., Meriden, Conn., and by Reed & Barton, New York City, and are warranted A No. 1 in every particular. Premiums will be forwarded as rapidly as possible in their order. A set of Spoons, Forks, &c., is always half-a-dozen pieces.

OR ANYTHING ELSE!

Any person wishing articles not on the above list, will please let us know what they prefer, and we will arrange to furnish them. *On lists of four or over, a commission of twenty per cent., (one-fifth the amount,) may be retained, if the money is preferred to the Premium.*

REMARKS.

Everything offered in our list of Premiums is guaranteed to be an excellent article. The valuation is simply the usual retail price of the article in Philadelphia and New York. By means of purchasing at the best sources, and at wholesale prices, and giving advertising in return, we are enabled to offer these splendid inducements. Our only object is to increase our circulation—giving those who help us to do this the benefit of the Premiums.

☞ The lists may be made up for THE SATURDAY EVENING POST exclusively at $3.00, or for THE LADY'S FRIEND exclusively at $2.50, or partly for one and partly the other, as is desired. Both old and new subscribers may be counted in the lists of four or over. In lists of two or three, all must be *new* subscribers. Either of our Steel Engravings may be substituted for the Chromo.

The Canvasser for a list for Premiums would do well to take with him a copy of THE POST, a copy of THE LADY'S FRIEND, and one of our beautiful Premium Chromos. They will be sent to those desirous of making up lists (and to those only) for $1.00. When the List is forwarded, in case the Chromo has been injured in canvassing for subscribers, another Chromo will be sent in its place.

The articles will be sent by express, or as ordered. Nothing will be charged for packing or boxing. The freight, however, must be paid by the receiver of the Premium.

Subscriptions (with the money) should be remitted as fast as obtained, that the subscribers may receive their papers, magazines, and Chromos at once.

EVERY NAME DESIGNED FOR A PREMIUM LIST MUST BE SO MARKED WHEN SENT IN.

☞ The contents of THE POST and of THE LADY'S FRIEND will always be entirely different.

Address **H. PETERSON & CO.,**
No. 319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

NOTE.—The price for which we offer THE POST and our beautiful CHROMO (or a Steel Engraving) to our yearly subscribers is just the same that all the first-class Literary Weeklies charge FOR THEIR PAPERS ALONE.

In other words, those who subscribe to The Post will get not only (to speak modestly) as good a paper, but either of our beautiful Premium Pictures besides.

Those that canvass for new subscribers should not forget this fact.

LETTERS FROM ZIG.

WOMEN'S HUSBANDS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Never say there isn't such a thing as clairvoyance again. Never deny the existence of curious and unexplainable circumstances There are the strangest coincidences in this world. Because the very day that I get THE POST with Daisy Burns's article giving me notice that she thinks married men need a blowing up, that same day I am projecting a chapter on Husbands. Don't tell me the "science of mind" is all fol-de-rol after that.

Daisy Burns thinks that married men need a blowing up because they nearly all cease to be thoughtful and lover-like toward their wives after they've been married awhile. Well, some of 'em do need a blowing up, doubtless, and a good one. Stingy husbands, slovenly husbands, husbands who tell their wives stories, ill-natured husbands, and husbands who start out in married life with the infernal notion that a man ought to be the head of the family—the very thought of these husbands makes me feel as belligerent as a Prussian. I've seen more deceitfulness, lying and general misery in families caused by that head-of-the-family notion than anything else. I'm always fighting that notion, and I shall keep on fighting it as long as I've a tooth or nail left. I read the greenest, silliest thing in a newspaper this morning about how men ought to go to work to win women This blessed mess of nonsense started out from the premise that a "female" naturally craves something to lean upon. Now, I've been a "female" all my life, and in all that time I don't remember of ever wanting particularly to lean upon anything except a bed, or a good big easy rocking-chair. Either one of 'em is vastly softer and nicer to lean upon than a man, and what's more, they don't get tired of being leaned against, and a man always does. So I think, for a steady thing, a bed or a rocking-chair, or a post, is preferable.

Daisy Burns—speaking of thoughtful and attentive husbands—how would you like to be wooed and won according to the native Australian fashion? It's a very extraordinarily tender and lover-like fashion, it is. Your aboriginal Australian "falls in love" with his sweet, thick-lipped, flat-headed Australian maid, chases her over hill and dale till he catches her, and then he knocks his beloved down with a club, and drags her off to his den in the ground. That's the Australian marriage-ceremony, blushes, wedding cake and all. I presume the native Australian husband is quite as polite and attentive to his wife after marriage as he is before.

But you wonder why the civilized husband doesn't keep up his nice, spooney ways after he has been married awhile, why he doesn't continue to express his affection in little gifts and by the hundred delicate lover-like attentions which mean so much to a woman. It has occurred to me to wonder the same thing, many a time. I've thought of it often and often. And you will pardon my saying it, Daisy Burns, but it appears to me that wives are quite as much to blame for it as husbands. Maybe I'm wrong, but that's how it looks.

There isn't any reason in the world why a husband and wife ought to cease being lover-like and polite to each other, but there are about a hundred reasons why they do generally stop all this pleasant little nonsense after awhile. An enthusiastic, forgive me if I should say "gushing" young person who isn't married, can have no idea what a change a wedding ceremony, however short, makes in the lives of two people who are foolish enough to dare it. After you are married, you have just exactly a thousand things to think of, where you had one before. Before dear Charles is married, he hasn't much to take up his mind, besides the bouquets and music, and ice-creams and that. After the knot is once fast tied—pardon me for introducing the ugly, vulgar idea, but after he's married, here in America, where lovers are not apt to be millionaires—he usually begins to think more about how he's going to keep the pot boiling than anything else. Where he bought Daisy a five-dollar bouquet, in the dear old spooney days, he now has to buy her a load of coal to keep her dear little footsey tootsies warm, and bake her pudding and roast. Shockingly vulgar, but a fact. And doubtless you'll be surprised to know it, but the money which, before the wedding, went to pay for those delicious serenades and ice-cream festivals, after the wedding not unfrequently has to pay for cabbage and Irish potatoes. Isn't it shocking? After the wedding, forever after, dear Charles has a young woman's board to pay, you see. And you, my dear Daisy, where you did your hair in curl-papers and worked slippers for Charles, and made him fancy cravats out of bits of your dove-colored silk dress, in the nice old spooney days—don't be surprised, after you're married, to find yourself sitting down some fine afternoon to mend dear Charles's unmentionables. Trowsers have to be mended, even if slippers are not worked. Isn't it shocking, again?

And so, of necessity somewhat, both husband and wife are apt to fall into a hard, cold, calculating way of looking at all the world, exceedingly unhealthy for romance and lovers' nonsense. Don't you see, dear Daisy? Instead of cooing and billing, you begin to think about parlor-carpets and kitchen-towels. Instead of taking you to the opera, Charles has to pay the rent. If greenbacks grew upon trees, for leaves, and you had but to walk into your yard and pluck them off,—why then it might be different. Such an atmosphere would be an atmosphere exceedingly congenial to the poetry of love.

But therefore, because, after marriage, beefsteak and cabbage must be thought of, as well as cooing and billing, ought a husband and wife to fall into the habit of living together like two wooden sticks? No; a thousand times no! A husband and wife ought to be lovers till they die, in spite of the world, in spite even of considerations of "mutton and baked taters." And I say again, Daisy, that because they are not so, is just as much the fault of wives as of husbands. Is a wife always as sweet and good-tempered and nice and polite to her husband as she was when she was only engaged? Don't wives have spells of being snappy and slovenly, and careless of those little things which are just as much to the husband as to the wife? I should think so. It appears to me I've noticed that a man naturally lapses into a heathen and a bear anyhow, if left to himself; and it's a part of woman's mission to refine and civilize the masculine gender, and make it mind its manners. It is every woman's duty to refine and civilize her own husband to begin on, and keep alive in him the tender, gentle part of his nature. How can she do it unless she makes a rule to try to be always ladylike and polite and pretty herself? Husbands need no end of nagging to keep 'em straight. You'll find that out, Daisy Burns, when you get one, piece of perfection though he will be, of course. And if a wife doesn't continue to be as neat and polite and pretty-looking to her husband as she was to her lover, the husband will be sure to fall into careless, thoughtless ways on his part. Some husbands do get to be such frightfully slovenly, shabby, seedy-looking creatures, that I wonder sometimes how on earth a woman can live with 'em, only that I know in every such case it's the wife's fault.

It appears to me,—it always did appear to me,—to be a most miserable mistake for people to get it into their heads that they needn't be polite and kind to one another at home. Last week I heard a young lady who had only been married a week call her nice new husband a liar. To be sure it was all only in sport, but somehow it sounded just horrible. I don't wonder that husbands get rough, ugly ways toward their wives, when wives commence on them in that manner. Then, too, I'm ashamed to write it, Daisy Burns, but at least half the married women whom I've known tell white lies to their husbands, and deceive them in numbers of mean, sneaking little ways. And just as sure as a married woman tells little stories to her husband, and deceives him, just as sure as death he finds it out, and from that moment, though he may still love her very much, his respect for his wife is gone forever. If I had a husband, and I thought he was inclined to be unreasonable, or impose upon me, I'd fight him till I die, but I'd never tell him a story.

I think there is nothing in this world quite so nice for a good woman to have as a real good chum and husband, who trusts her perfectly, and whom she trusts perfectly; to whom she is careful to be always just as polite as she was the day she was married, and who therefore will always be thoughtful and attentive to her. A good, sprightly, cultured woman can call out all the manliness in a man's nature, and I am foolish enough to believe there's a sight of manliness in a man. Maybe the husband and wife who are perfectly honest to each other will quarrel sometimes, but if they do, they keep it to themselves, and make it all up like good comrades, and pass on. There are no such two good friends upon earth, Daisy Burns, as a husband and wife who understand each other, and try, both of them, to live happily, honestly and peaceably together. They are lovers all their lives, and never grow cold or careless to each other, and never forgetful of each other.

ZIG.

ON DECK.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY W. W. HUTCHINSON.

Three of us sat on the hurricane deck,
Watching the waves roll high,—
Watching the dark smoke float away,—
Watching the sails drift by.

One was stately and tall and dark,
With the air of an Indian queen,
And one was a dainty little one,
With the grace of a stray sunbeam.

While I,—but what is the use? You know,
You, of three-score and ten,
How at twenty-one you played your part,
As other boys did then.

We sang and chatted, chatted and sang
The idle hours away,
Till our singing was only the ghost of a song,
And for talking, we'd nothing to say.

At last the sun, whose *role* had been
A coquette's part at best,
Weary of playing at hide-and-seek,
Sank down in the far-off West.

The queen of our party, grown weary
Of the quiet monotone,
With caution of "Don't stay late, my dears,"
Arose, and left us alone.

Alone with the wind and the restless sea,
Only the sea and the sky,
And the two great fleeces of soft, gray smoke,
That, mingled in one, drift by.

The wind grew fiercer; we moved our seats
To the leeward side of the boat,
And watched, in the West, a phantom ship
On a golden cloud-sea float.

Till at last the shadows hid them all,
And molten gold turned gray,
And the stars from their moorings had broken loose,
And went drifting over the bay.

I looked from the sea and the straying stars,
To the sunbeam at my side.
"Darling! the ship that bears my hopes—
Must it sink in a stormy tide?"

The waves, with a whisper sad, swept by,
The wind played a dirge in the ropes,
As into the sea of silence sank
My ship, with its beautiful hopes.

AN EPISTLE FROM KANSAS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

DEAR POST:—I fully sympathize with your correspondent, with the unpronounceable name, as regards "deestrict-school teaching." I am a country "school marm" myself; and in the far West too, where the broad prairie is almost boundless; and I concur with her idea that teaching bread and molasses children is not all poetry. But this *boarding 'round*, why I thought it a remnant of the dark ages. My dear, you should come to Kansas, for here is the *Teacher's* Paradise. *We* never have to board 'round. No indeed. A nice home is furnished us, where we take our luggage at the commencement of the term, and there we have a comfortable home until the close of the year.

But teaching! Ugh! To-day all is fair sailing, and at night you wend your way home, smilingly saying in your inmost heart, "Who would not be a leader of cherubic childhood?" To-morrow everything goes wrong. The imp of all wickedness seems to possess yesterday's *angels!* Each pupil seems to vie with the rest in mischievousness. And in your stormy discouragement you mentally call the cherubs "little wretches," and anathematize *all* urchins. Indeed this school-teaching is anything but pleasant, take it all together. It tends to make us sour, cross, nervous and ill-natured. Poets may rave, philosophers may rant, and clergymen may preach. Let them try it, that is all I have to say.

A young and handsome school ma'am may be nice, but she soon gets old and ugly, and of all pitiful beings in the universe an "old maid teacher" beats!

NANNIE.

Atchison, Kansas.

RIGHTS OF PASSENGERS.

"THE FIGHT OF A MAN WITH A RAILROAD."

JOHN A. COLEMAN'S STORY.—A REMARKABLE CASE.

The Atlantic Monthly, for December, contains an article written by Mr. John A. Coleman, of Providence, R. I., on his late contest with the New York and New Haven Railroad. The circumstances of this contest, decided a few months ago by the Courts of Massachusetts in Mr. Coleman's favor, will be recalled by most newspaper readers. About four years ago he purchased a ticket from Providence to New York *via* Hartford and New Haven. Having been detained at New Haven until it was too late to conveniently complete his journey by rail, he came to New York by steamboat, and so had left on his hands the railway coupon-ticket from New Haven to New York. Not having occasion to use the ticket between the points and in the direction indicated on its face, he kept it until June, 1868. One day in that month he applied at the ticket-office of the New Haven Railroad in Twenty-seventh street for a ticket to Boston *via* Springfield. This the agent refused to sell unless Mr. Coleman would wait three hours for the train that left at three o'clock in the afternoon, although the latter told the agent that he desired to stop over at a way-station one train, to do some telegraphing. Mr. Coleman then thinking this a good opportunity to use his old coupon, presented it to the guard stationed at the entrance to the cars. He met with rude and insolent treatment, not only from the guard, but from the conductor; both said that the ticket was "good for nothing," and the conductor peremptorily ordered Mr. Coleman not to go on board the cars, and said that if he attempted it he would put him off. He then purchased a ticket to Providence *via* New Haven and Hartford, and took his seat in the cars.

When the conductor gathered the tickets, Mr. Coleman offered his old coupon. The conductor refused to receive it, saying it was good from New Haven to New York, but not for a passage in the opposite direction. As the train approached Stamford, the conductor appeared again, and said, in a very abrupt manner: "Well, sir, how shall we settle this matter?" Mr. Coleman answered quietly, as before, and finally proposed to give the conductor his address, and to agree that if the reception of the ticket resulted in the reprimand, even, of the conductor, he would send to him the money for the ticket, provided he would return the ticket. This the conductor would not listen to, but said that he should put Mr. Coleman off the train. At Stamford he carried his threat into execution. Five or six rough brakemen and baggagemen wrenched him from the seat, taking the frame and cushion at the same time, pounded him with their fists, and then threw him broadside from the platform of the car to the platform of the depot. In the struggle they tore the flesh from his arm and leg and ruptured him for life. As the train started again Mr. Coleman got upon a car, but the superintendent, his son, and another man, pulled him off, and held him until the train had gone. Then he showed them his through ticket, and asked them why they held him?

When Mr. Coleman reached Boston he attached the New York express train, partly owned by the New Haven Company, and brought suit against them in the Superior Court of Massachusetts for $10,000 damages. In the first trial the jury awarded a verdict in his favor of $3,300. After several weeks' delay, the Judge set the verdict aside at the request of the railroad, on the ground that the amount was excessive. The second trial occurred in January, 1870, and resulted in a disagreement of the jury, eleven standing for the plaintiff and one, who had been connected with the road, standing for the defendants. The third trial took place in May of the same year, and resulted in an award of $3,450 damages. A new trial was refused, and the road appealed to the Supreme Court on points of law. Here a new trial was ordered, and after thirteen months' delay, a verdict of $3,500 damages was obtained.

Mr. Coleman, after telling his story in a very interesting manner, discusses at considerable length the laws governing railroad companies and the rights and privileges of travellers. He takes as his text the following declaration made to him by a prominent railway official, and some of the charges of the judge, which will be referred to further on. One of the officials said to him on one occasion:

"The road has no personal animosity against you, Mr. Coleman, but you represent the public; and the road is determined to make it so terrible for the public to fight it, right or wrong, that they will stop it. We are not going to be attacked in this way."

"These threats," says Mr. Coleman, "were not directed against myself alone, but against the public. * * * * If a limb is crushed by the negligence of the railroad men, *fight* instead of *pay* the victim is their theory of dealing with the public; and they will remove all opposition by the power of wealth, influence with the courts, and sheer terrorism." In the first trial,

"The Judge charged directly against passengers upon every point. He ruled that the ticket was a contract; that the road had a right to make any rule it pleased for its own government, and if a passenger broke a rule he was a trespasser, and being a trespasser, the road had the same right to eject him from its cars that one of the jurymen had to eject a man from his private house if he did not want him there. The only question for the jury to consider was, whether an excess of violence had been used by the road in the maintenance of a right."

Commenting on these rulings, Mr. Coleman says:

"In the first place, I deny that a common railroad ticket is a contract, in the sense in which the judge decided it. A traveller applies, for example, at the ticket-office for a passage between New York and New Haven. He passes his money to the ticket-master; a receipt for that money is returned to him printed all over with 'rules,' 'good for this day only,' 'forfeited if detached,' 'company not responsible for baggage,' 'passengers shall carry nothing for baggage but wearing-apparel;' and if they desired, they might add, "the company will hang the passengers at the end of the route." Let them make 'any rule they please,' and the judge says it is a contract. Has the road alone the right to supply the conditions of the contract? * * * * A contract implies more than one party, except in the eyes of this court and the railway company. It is idle to reply that the acceptance of the ticket implies assent to its provisions on the part of the passenger. He cannot help himself; they have got his money and he must take anything they choose to give him. The train is waiting; his business is urgent; and he must make the best of his helpless situation."

* * * * * * * *

"It would seem that a railroad ticket is more like the issue of a banking corporation; I deposit my money and they give me their tickets, or what we term bank-bills, which are redeemable at my convenience. The same with the road; and, in the meantime, both institutions have the use of my money. Would it be law for the bank to 'make any rule it pleased,' and declare that my money should be forfeited if I did not call for it six days from date? How absurd for the bank to maintain that it was a rule of theirs, which one of their clerks said was given to him verbally several years before by the cashier, who in any event had no right to make any rules at all. Suppose I had gone to California as soon as I had deposited the money. I could not have drawn my money in six days; must I lose it?"

* * * * * * *

"If a ticket is a contract *per se*, then where is the Government contract stamp on it, as on any other contract? If that judge's ruling is good law, the road would seem to be liable to heavy penalties for all the contracts it has issued without such stamps."

Mr. Coleman thinks that we need a general railroad law covering the following points:

"First, that the fares shall be uniform and at reasonable rates, say two cents per mile. If it is necessary for a new road to receive a higher rate until it shall be upon a paying basis, allow it an excess and limit the time during which an excess shall be charged; or else pay the road a subsidy from the State funds, upon the principle upon which poor post routes are maintained, keeping the rates low, and inducing thereby an influx of settlers who will eventually support the road. Second, when a first-class fare is paid, a first-class passage shall be given in a comfortable car, with such appointments as the law shall specify; polite and kind treatment to be required from employés, and the comfort and convenience of passengers to be assured, as well as the safety of life and limb. When a person is taken in charge by a railroad, he must be delivered in good order at the end of the journey, undamaged in feelings and person, as he was received. Third, when a dollar is received for travel from a passenger, the equivalent of that dollar shall be returned in travel; not according to the caprice of the company, but according to equity and justice, and the reasonable demand of the passenger. Fourth, in all cases of disagreement or of wrong-doing, the road shall be compelled to confine itself to the same peaceful means of redress as an individual, and cause arrests only by regular authority appointed by law, unless the offender be guilty of obscene or indecent conduct in the car, or commit a trespass upon life and property. The present mediæval system of barbarity in the summary treatment of passengers, must give place to something in accordance with the enlightenment of the nineteenth century. The railroad companies must be made aware that the travelling public is not composed of cattle or sheep; nor are they in any sense the natural prey of the companies, but human beings, entitled to consideration as such. The American people are a long-suffering race. But let the corporations who are presuming upon their good nature reflect that they are sowing the wind, and the mutterings of a storm are beginning to be heard that betoken that they will one day reap the whirlwind."

The Post Fifty Years Ago.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

[The following is from a gentleman who was, we believe, the *first* editor of THE POST:]

MR. PETERSON—Fifty years is a long space in a life time, a truth which is just now impressed upon my mind by the death last week of one of the earliest contributors to the *Saturday Evening Post*. But two others of my own personal friends are now living of the writers of that early period, one of these Hon. Joseph R. Chandler, whose address a week since before the *Historical Society* recalled this able and veteran editor to mind. The other is my friend William Chapin, now and for many years past the successful and esteemed principal of the *Institution for the Blind*. To the former it was my pleasant duty to pay a "prize" of $200 in compliment to his "Superstitions of New England;" and to the latter I was always indebted for contributions which, under the *nom de plume* of Pasquin, attained much favor. But the brightest and loveliest writer that ever graced the columns of the *Post* was the fair poet of Windermere, whose death I read of but yesterday in a daily paper. Fifty years since this highly esteemed and greatly beloved favorite wrote to ladies of my family affectionate poetical epistles, one of which I took the liberty of publishing, appending thereto the name of "Rosa," and thenceforth she became a great favorite with the readers of the *Post;* ranking among the most distinguished writers of the day. When premiums, or as then termed "prizes," were offered for the best articles in prose and verse, the committee of decision, headed by the most popular Philadelphia author (Alderman James N. Barker,) awarded to Rosa the first prize for a beautiful poem entitled "The Isle of Roses."

But those days are long since past, those pleasant days of the olden time, and one after another of the youthful spirits that built up the fame and fortunes of the *Post* disappeared—some into the walks of private life, as merchants or in other business pursuits, and some early laid down the burthen of life and quietly rested from their labors.

Rosa, whose memory I have ever fondly cherished, was of English parentage, coming from the Windermere lake region, which Wordsworth has immortalized in his simple yet charming verse. She was of a quiet, retiring disposition, and was reluctantly drawn from the seclusion she enjoyed by the persuasion of friends, her first effusion having made its appearance without her knowledge. Yet she was a sweet, true poet, and greatly beloved. After some years of intimacy, this lady was lost to public view, having married and removed from the scenes which she had tenderly graced by her ever welcome presence. She became the head of a family of children partaking largely of their mother's amiable qualities.

The intimacy with the family of the *Post* editor ceased as the gentle "Rosa" quietly glided into the peaceful bosom of the SOCIETY OF FRIENDS, in which she became an occasional speaker; not a "stated preacher," but only I presume as the spirit moved. Henceforth her voice took precedence of her pen. Although it is to me like a dream, yet true it is that for so long a period as forty years I have never once seen the fair "Rosa," my favorite and well-appreciated correspondent; never once, in all that time, have I looked into the beaming eyes, whose pure violet hue charmed the beholder, so entirely did our lives diverge: hers into the pathway of Quaker quietness, mine into the busy cares of a publisher's life.

"But fortune points thy path of life
Far, far away from mine:
This hour may be when next we meet
An auld lang syne."

And I may quote the bard whose verse chimes in with the spirit of my dream of other days:

"Oft in the stilly night, ere slumber's chains have bound me,
Fond memory brings the light of other days around me—
The hopes, the fears of boyhood's years, the words of love then spoken,
The eyes that shone, now dimmed and gone—
When I remember all, the friends so linked together,
I've seen around me fall, like leaves in wintry weather,
I feel like one who treads alone some banquet hall deserted."

T. C. C.

☞ A Colorado man makes this terrible suggestion to a scientific journal: "Why not have a whole city furnished simultaneously with the latest telegraphic news upon the instant of its arrival by means of a steam-whistle or whistles, or a gigantic speaking-machine, instead of waiting for it to go through the tedious process of type setting, printing, folding, and distribution by the carrier?"

A SINGULAR COINCIDENCE.—There is a singular coincidence between the destruction of Chicago and Boston. The Boston fire occurred at the very same hour and on the same day of the week and month. The only difference is that one happened in October and the other in November.

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FAREWELL.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Farewell! 'tis but a little word
To give such cruel pain;
Farewell! in all the coming years
We may not meet again.

Farewell! I know that it must be,
That we must walk apart;
And sorrow, like a heavy pall,
Is settling round my heart.

Farewell! the dirge is chanted now,
Our hearts grow faint and cold;
O'er all our dead and buried hopes
The funeral bell is tolled.

Farewell! would that some Lethean stream
Across my troubled soul
In waves of deep forgetfulness
Its dull, dark course would roll.

Farewell! farewell! we meet no more
Upon this earthly ball;
Of life is only left to us
The wormwood and the gall.

HELLE BREMER.

JOHN PASSMORE'S PLOT;

OR,

HELD IN THE HIDDEN ROOM.

A STORY OF PHILADELPHIA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY FRANK CARROLL.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AT SOLOMON'S.

The two prisoners were given in charge of several of the policemen, with directions to take them to the central station. The others proceeded to examine the store, and to estimate the amount of damage done. In this they were aided by one of the clerks, who, in company with Mr. Graham, now entered. It was found that goods to a very considerable value had been taken. The burglars had acted as if with perfect knowledge of the locality, having not in the slightest degree disturbed any but the most valuable goods. As the clerk remarked, it looked almost like a case of collusion.

"Had I not better telegraph to Mr. Passmore?" he asked. "He is at Cape May, but I think it important that he should be on the ground."

"It would be better," said Graham. "In the meantime we must take every means to recover these stolen goods. What action do you advise, Mr. Wood?"

The detective had stood listening to their remarks with a covert smile on his face.

"There is a party in pursuit of the carriage," he said, "and we shall have something more definite in a few minutes. I am vexed to have allowed them to gain so much advantage, but did not dream that they would have made their attempt at such an unreasonably early hour."

At this instant the policeman who had been in pursuit of the carriage entered, with disappointment plainly written on his features. He had traced it for several squares, but it had been driven with such rapidity as to leave him entirely in the rear. He had heard of its passing at full speed down Sixth street past the corner of Walnut, but beyond this point had lost all trace of it.

"What now, Mr. Wood?" asked Graham.

"I think I have them holed," he replied. "I will leave you here to set matters right, while I follow up my idea."

Leaving the store, he walked rapidly to Sixth street and took a car.

"They were making a dead break for the Rookery," he muttered. "It is just what I expected. It is well I have as trusty a man as Thompson on duty there. If that rascal who escaped wasn't Joe Corbin, I never saw the man. I wish I had had a chance for a better look at him."

He left the car at Shippen street, and in a few moments was close by the Rookery. Here a low whistle brought from one of the adjoining houses the same man the detective had talked with on his former visit here.

"Anything new turned up?" he asked.

"Not a mouse stirring," was the reply. "I have been specially vigilant to-night, as you requested, but there has not a shadow crossed the threshold."

"There has no carriage stopped at or near the house?" asked Wood, in an anxious and disappointed tone.

"Carriage! Certainly not. I have not heard the sound of a wheel for the last hour, except the car wheels."

The detective stood biting his lip in anxiety and anger.

"Hold, as I am a living man," he muttered. "Joe Corbin has covered my blind, and gone one better. Where in the thunder is their crib now? Our prisoners are not worth a red cent to us for this. Jack Bouncer wouldn't blow if it would save him ten years, and the other one is a baby. Such old stagers are not going to trust the likes of him."

"Has Corbin struck ile?" asked Thompson.

"Yes, or struck silk, which pays better. Blast his sharp picture, I thought I had him laid out level to-night, and he's given me the go by."

"Maybe he's taking a turn to throw you off the track, and will strike for his hole yet."

"You had better keep a sharp eye open, and if you see a carriage stop, or anything suspicious— Ha! Come in here!" he continued, in an excited whisper, taking Thompson by the arm and dragging him into a narrow, house alley at whose mouth they stood.

The object which had caused this exclamation had that instant passed under the full light of a gas lamp a few rods ahead, in full view of the officers, who stood in the shadow of the houses.

It was the figure of a boy, who came whistling by, unsuspicious of their presence.

Mr. Wood had, at a glance, recognized the slight form and marked face of Patsy.

He expected to see him turn into the Rookery. Instead of that he walked rapidly on, passing their hiding place without suspecting an ambush.

"Keep watch here, Thompson," said Wood. "I must follow the boy. He may be making straight for the headquarters of the burglars."

Without waiting for an answer the officer stepped cautiously out into the street, and began an advance in pursuit of the boy.

He had sufficient experience of Patsy's acuteness to feel the need of extreme caution, and he followed so as to keep him barely in sight. The night gave him the advantage of the deep shadows of the houses, and enabled him to approach more nearly the object of his pursuit than he could have done by day.

The boy went whistling on, not dreaming that a lurking shadow was dogging his steps, dodging in a doorway if he paused or turned, hugging the houses as it passed a street lamp, treading with a step that made no sound, a step that had been schooled to silence in many a scene of dangerous experience.

At every corner the boy turned the man hurried rapidly forward, lest he should disappear from sight in some house. As Patsy turned into South street, Wood again glided hastily to the corner, and glanced down the street in the direction the boy had taken.

He was rewarded by seeing Patsy on a door-step a few houses from the corner, in the very act of opening the door and entering.

Whether the detective made some suspicious noise in this movement, or Patsy had an instinct of danger, he suddenly left the step and walked back, whistling more loudly than ever, toward the corner that concealed Wood.

The latter drew back into the shadow of a projection, but not quick enough to escape the sharp eyes of the boy. Patsy, however, walked straight on, still whistling, as if heedless of danger.

"His whistle is too loud to be natural," said Wood to himself. "Otherwise the boy is keen as a razor. It looks as if he was playing decoy on me. I know the house he stopped at, and can afford to follow him a short distance. I might lose by letting him escape me."

The pursuit was now conducted with still greater caution. Patsy walked along with apparent unconcern, but the keen observer behind him noticed that there was not the same directness of route as before. He turned unexpected corners. He went east in some streets and west in others. His course was, in fact, that of one who had no objective point, but who took streets at random as he came to them.

Such was Wood's conclusion as he at length stopped.

"He knows I am after him, and is trying to lead me astray," he said. "He is not making the shortest line between two points, as any boy with his knowledge of the streets would, if he had any fixed point to go to. I will try the house on South street."

The detective was right. After the robbery Patsy had hung around till he saw Corbin escape, and the two prisoners taken off to the station.

He had followed these with the hope that he might get some communication from them, or assist them in some way. After seeing them safely immured in the station he went in search of Corbin.

He knew well that he would not find him that night at the Rookery, and concluded to try Solomon's house, a place to which he had already been with messages from Corbin.

He had caught a glimpse of Wood, peering at him from the corner, as he stood on the doorstep, and at once felt that he had been followed, and concluded to try and lead him astray.

He had reckoned without his host. Wood, giving up the pursuit, returned to the point at which Patsy had stopped, and took a close observation of the house. It was in nowise distinct from those surrounding it, a plain, brick house, with a store window in front, as had all the houses on the street.

A light burned in the second-story window, but was veiled by closely-drawn blinds.

As he stood observing from the opposite side of the street he saw a man approach the door, open it without ringing, and hastily enter. This person was wrapped in a cloak that hid his form from view, and so shadowed his features, over which a slouched hat was drawn low, as to render recognition difficult.

"An attempt at disguise," thought the observer. "A very suspicious indication. Why should I not profit by his example, and enter without knocking? Let me see. There is a shadow on that window. Some one has passed before the light. Perhaps to receive a visitor. That room is my objective point."

Without further pause the officer passed up the street, crossed at the near corner, and proceeded to the door of the house in question.

Opening this without hesitation, except to see that his pistol was ready to his hand, he walked softly into the entry, shutting the door noiselessly behind him.

The passage was dimly lighted by a gas-jet burning in the room back. It ended in a flight of stairs, with an offset leading to the rear of the house.

He paused here an instant, and taking a pair of large woollen socks from his pocket, drew them over his boots with a quickness that could only have come from long practice.

He now proceeded boldly yet carefully to ascend the stairs, and succeeded in reaching the passage above with perfect noiselessness.

This passage ran toward the front of the house, facing a door that opened into the front room, between which and the wall was the foot of a second flight of stairs, leading to the third story.

A door on the other side of the passage opened into the rear room of the main building.

From where the detective stood he could hear a faint hum of voices, appearing to proceed from the front apartment.

All this was observed instantly, and he at once opened the door of the back room, which he entered, closing the door carefully behind him.

The room was dark, save a faint glimmer of light that apparently came through the key-hole of a door connecting with the front apartment.

The eye of the intruder was at once applied to this opening, but he only succeeded in seeing a line of carpeting, and the corner of a table before the blank wall opposite.

He tried his ear with better fortune. A conversation was going on in tones plainly audible to him. He made himself as comfortable as possible in his constrained position, and listened intently.

A voice, strange to him, was saying excitedly:

"There's been bungling of some kind in the business; or, it may be, treachery. If so, you can trust my finding out the traitor, and settling with him."

"I hope tho. It alwayth makes me nervouth to think of thuch things," said another unknown voice, peculiarly hoarse, yet with a decided lisp. "All I know ith the cab drove up, about half-loaded, and the driver thaid he had been attacked, and had to drive hard for it."

"And I suppose I am to swallow this lame story, after all the precautions taken? The police could have known nothing of the affair without information, and beware, Solomon Gantly, if you were the man that gave it."

"What for! What could I gain by acting traitor?" said the other. "My hopth lie in your suctheth, not in your failure. If anybody hath been treacherouth—"

"And I tell you somebody has," cried the first speaker, still more excitedly. "I will find him out, whoever he is, and will pay him in different coin from what he expects."

"I hope you will. Traitorth in delicate affairth are dangerouth intruderth."

"Where are the silks?"

"Put away in a hiding-place that is my theoret. Don't fear that the best detective in the city will ever find them."

The heart of the listener leaped at this question and answer. The indications of the preceding conversation were fully confirmed, and he knew now, without doubt, that he was on the right trail.

"And the security which you were to give me?"

"But my chanth for profith ith much hurt by thith failure. You won't ask me to give thuch a dangerouth paper for the little profit that will come to me?"

"No paltering with me, fellow. Don't try your Jew games, if you want to get safe out of my hands. The security is only for your good faith. I will have no object in sending you to prison if you act honestly."

"I think I can trust you, Mr. Pathmore," said the Jew.

What further was said was lost to the listener in his exultation in hearing this name.

"So!" he said to himself. "Passmore, hey! I thought as much. I have been reaching out for you, my man, for a week, and now I've got my finger safely on you. So Passmore planned this robbery! Passmore is at the bottom of all the trouble, I'll bet high on it. But as sure as I'm a living man he's near the end of his rope."

His revery was interrupted by the sound of a heavy tread on the stairs. The voices in the next room ceased, as if the speakers were alarmed at the noise.

But little time was given them to prepare for an intrusion. The heavy tread sounded along the passage, and the door of the room was flung fiercely open.

"Joe Corbin!" cried Passmore, in a loud voice.

"And if it is Joe Corbin, you needn't yell it so that it can be heard in the next street," said the other, angrily. "Come, old man, tip me a glass of whisky, for blast me if I a'n't as dry as a Jersey sand-bank."

There was a fierceness in the man's tone that showed he was laboring under great anger and excitement.

"Joe Corbin!" said the listener to himself. "The plot is ripening fast. The game is coming out just about as I expected. If I could only clear up that mystery about Willing and the girl, I could spring the trap on them all. I have this party safe, though; I can wait a day or two to bring the other parties into the game."

"That's the stuff, Sol," muttered Joe. "Durn my eyes of I ever wanted a taste of old rye half so bad. See here, John Passmore, mebbe you can tell me the name of the cove as sold the pass on us. If I had him I wouldn't take five minutes to chaw him into mincemeat."

"There has been infernal bungling somewhere among you," cried Passmore, as excitedly. "Where are your comrades?"

"Nabbed! In a station-house call by this time, I s'pose."

"And how did it all happen? Did the police make a raid on you? How was the thing discovered?"

"It was a put-up job, that's how. A reg'lar case of blow. Why we were clean surrounded. We'd got the wagon about half full when Patsy guv the alarm. The driver made tracks, but durn me of I know whether he were cotched or not."

"No. He got here and delivered hith load thafely," said the Jew.

"So much the better," growled Joe. "We had a reg'lar fight for it. One party come on us from the front, and another from the back. The fust thing I knew there were a line of them across the store, with barkers looking straight in our eyes."

"How did you escape?"

"How! I doused the glim, dropped one man in the dark, and made for the cellar-stairs. When I got there I tuk a look back, and seen that Jack was a goner."

"And how did you get off?"

"By the back cellar winder. We'd left it open on our way down, so I had only to make one jump through it, and take to my heels."

"You must have had a sharp run for it."

"Run! What the deuse 'd I run for? It's well enough for new hands to run as ain't got their eye-teeth cut. But you don't catch Joe Corbin runnin' fur."

"And who has betrayed us? That is the important question now."

"The question now is to keep shady," said Joe, in a contemptuous tone. "I don't keer three winks of a cat's tail who done it just now. It's done, and that's our provender for the present. Time enough after we're safe ourselves to hunt up our friend. Then, as I told you, I only want a chance to chaw him."

"Did you know the officers?" asked Solomon.

"Only one of them. A fellow called Wood, on the detective force. I don't know what took him there. I'd like to get even with him for meddlin' in what's none of his bus'ness. I will too of he ain't spry."

"Forewarned is forearmed, my dear sir," thought the listener. "If you get the best of me it will be by getting to Cherry Hill first, for that's the road you're taking."

"Where's the stuff?" asked Corbin, ignorant that he was being mentally consigned to the penitentiary by an unseen listener. "Hope you've got it safe. We worked hard for it."

"It ith thafe enough. Ath I told you before, my theoret ith my capital, tho you'll have to take my word for it."

"It's to you," said Joe. "Can you trust this fellow, Passmore?"

"He dare not prove false. Have you that paper ready, Solomon?"

"I thoon will," replied the Jew, apparently searching through his desk. "I gueth I must have left my blank checkth in the next room. I'll get them in a minute."

"Hold on there, my hearty," growled Corbin. "Where did you say you were goin'?"

"To the next room."

"Mebbe a little good company might be agreeable to you. I calkerlate as how I'd like to see this next room."

"Come on then," replied Solomon. "I gueth you'll find all straight."

At this proposition the heart of the listener beat with unwonted force. He must hide or fight. But where would he hide? There was a closet in the room, but not half deep enough to conceal him. It might also be the first place searched.

In the opposite corner was a small bedstead. He might possibly conceal himself under it. But if he should be discovered there he would be taken at a great disadvantage. He glanced at the window. It overlooked an open space, but a slight porch overhung the back door of the store below.

Without hesitation he swung himself out on to this sloping porch, hoping they would bring no light into the room, and that the hand with which he grasped the window sill would escape notice.

He was alarmed the next instant by seeing the glare of a lamp flood the room through the opened door.

His only resource now was to grasp firmly with both hands the edge of the roof, and brace himself between that and the wall of the house.

It was a position that required a strong muscular effort, and he could only hope that they would leave the room before his strength gave out.

Their steps were now heard walking about the room.

"It all looks square here," muttered Joe, as he took a general observation of the apartment.

Solomon meanwhile was looking through the closet for the missing book.

In doing so he held the light so that it shone strongly on his face, his spectacles being displaced in the eagerness of his search.

Corbin, who had been looking under the bed, as if expecting to see some of the silks hidden there, turned and caught a glimpse of Solomon's face, thus strongly illuminated.

"Ha!" he cried, in an involuntary exclamation.

"What's the matter?" said Solomon, hastily turning, the book in his hand.

"Nothing. I only run a pin in my finger. Is that your book?"

"Yes," said the Jew, leading the way from the room.

Joe paused a moment, looking out of the window, over the crouching form of the detective.

"I know you now, my lark," he said, with a sardonic laugh. "If I don't pay you out, my name ain't Joe Corbin."

He left the room just as Wood's strength was beginning to give out.

In an instant the latter had grasped the sill again, and swung himself back upon the floor.

Hurrying to his former point of listening, he found all silent in the next room, except the scratching sound of a pen, as if the Jew were filling up the promised paper.

"By the way, Solomon," said Passmore, "we have only your word about the safety of those silks. I would like to see for myself the room you have placed them in. They may not be as safe in my eyes."

"All right," was the answer. "The check ith ready now, but we can leave it till we come down. Thith way, gentlemen."

He led the way from the room, and up the steps to the third story.

Hardly had they gone ere Wood slipped through the door of the room and into the apartment just vacated by the worthy trio.

A single glance enabled him to take in the general aspect of the room. But his attention was chiefly directed to the check that lay written on the desk. A step brought him beside this. What was his surprise, his utter astonishment, to find it signed by the name of the lost merchant, Benjamin Willing!

CHAPTER XXIV.

A VILLAIN UNVEILED.

We must return to Alice, whom we left in the horror and despair induced by the revelations of her attendant.

Misery is often one of the penalties of knowledge, and the information she had so skillfully drawn from the unsuspecting boy had made her perfectly wretched.

She had placed such confidence in Passmore's friendship and earnest devotion to her service. And now to find that he was the source of all her suffering, that he was a liar and traitor, and had almost induced her to accept his hand in marriage by a course of the most heartless prevarication; it made her blood run cold to think of it, and she thanked God fervently that some inner whisper had held her back from a too ready acceptance of his proposal.

The extent of his treachery seemed so enormous that at times she could not believe it. But then the story of the boy was so innocently told, and was so borne out by circumstances in her own knowledge, that she could not long doubt.

She loathed herself that she had let her hand touch his, that she had half consented to his embrace, that she had touched with her lips those of a traitor. She sought with feverish eagerness to rub from her face the taint of such a contaminating kiss, as it now seemed to her.

The room in which she was immured, the gilded prison he had prepared for her, became loathsome to her sight. Why had she not noticed more particularly the mode of opening the secret door?

She took her lamp and searched with the utmost care for the spring by which her visitors opened it at pleasure. In vain; she could not find it. Or if the projection she imagined to be the spring was really so, she could not discover how to operate it.

She desisted at length, and concluded to observe cautiously on Patsy's next appearance. If she could find the spring she might be able to escape in the night. She felt that it would be impossible to escape by day, from a house which she judged to be full of unscrupulous people.

It was the day after the robbery. The hours passed on leaden wings. In vain she tried to divert her mind in the pages of books. She could bring no attention to bear upon them. The printed page seemed to her a succession of unmeaning lines. She closed book after book in disgust, and paced her chamber with the restlessness of a caged lioness.

It was near the dinner-hour, and she waited with impatience for the appearance of the boy with her noon-tide meal. At length he appeared. She entered into no conversation with him, but stood closely watching his every movement.

She had pulled the door to behind him so that he would have to touch the spring to open it. But he apparently suspected her object, and closely as she watched she failed to detect the secret of his rapid manipulation.

Patsy was too cunning to be caught by any such transparent artifice as that by which the heart-sick prisoner sought to entrap him.

She could not keep her purpose from her face, and the boy saw it at a glance.

"Miss Alice wants to slope," he said, as he went down-stairs. "Wish I could help her. But Uncle Joe put me on honor, and I can't go back on that. Poor lady, I don't wonder she's tired, I'd burst and blow up in a day if I was there."

Alice forced herself to taste the food. She had so "supped on sorrow" that all appetite for more substantial viands was gone. But she felt the necessity of preserving her strength, and that could not be done without food.

She had drawn back from the table, and stood a moment leaning on the back of a chair, her eyes fixed wistfully on that mysterious door, when it opened, and the form of John Passmore stood on the threshold.

Her start of surprise was succeeded by a red flush of indignation, as she gazed sternly upon his now hated form.

He, turning to close the door behind him, failed to observe her emotion. He turned again toward her with a face beaming with smiles, as if confident of a warm welcome and a favorable answer to his suit. Astonishment scarcely expresses his feeling on seeing her cold, stern look, and the erect, motionless attitude with which she awaited his advance.

"My dear Alice," he began, in a slightly faltering voice, "I have returned with the hope of being made happy for life by your favorable acceptance of my suit. The hours have seemed days since I parted from you, and I have flown hither on the wings of love to win bliss from your loving lips."

His well conned speech lost spirit under the cold reproach of her glance. He seemed to be repeating a lesson, instead of speaking the heart-felt words of an ardent lover.

She heard him through with glittering eye and scornful expression.

"Are you done?" she asked.

"I await your answer," was all the reply he could muster, in his bewilderment at this unexpected reception.

"You will excuse my putting it into many words. I have concluded not to marry you, John Passmore," she replied, in accents of the most cutting disdain.

His face suddenly flushed with anger at this scornful answer.

"And why, may I ask? What reasons have you to give for such a reply, couched in such language?"

"You did not require reasons: simply an answer. It was at my option to make what answer I saw fit, and to withhold my reasons if I wished. You have the answer you so eagerly craved. Have you further business with me?"

"What has come over you, Alice Worthington?" he angrily asked. "What tone is this in which to address one like me, who has risked my safety, my very life in your behalf? At this very moment I stand between you and imminent danger. For the meed of my services I receive scorn and insult. I did not require reasons for your answer, you say; I do require reasons for the uncalled-for tone of your answer."

"You desire that I should give my reasons then?"

"Yes," he cried, in a loud, stern voice, well-fitted to intimidate her, but that her soul was then roused above intimidation. "I parted from you almost acknowledging your love, on the point of accepting my suit. I return to find you with scorn on your lips and anger in your eyes. You have deeply wronged me, Alice Worthington. I demand an explanation."

"You shall have one," she replied, with all the earnestness of indignation. "Not that you really need one, for your own soul tells you, this minute, more than I can find words to express. I listened to your addresses, suffered your embrace, almost convinced myself that I returned your professed love, because I looked upon you as my protector and preserver, and had half raised gratitude to the lofty station of love."

"And now?" he asked, with far less assurance of manner, as her words implied, what he would not admit at first, that she had discovered his double dealing and treachery.

"And now!" she replied, seeming to gain greater height in the stern attitude she assumed; "and now I have to tell you, that I have discovered you to be a traitor of the deepest dye—a wretch so base and false, that I scorn myself for ever listening to your deceitful tongue."

His face turned all colors, from the crimson of deep anger to the pallor of death, as she uttered these accusing words.

He stepped forward hastily and seized her by the wrist, as she extended her arm in the earnestness of her denunciation.

"Who has been lying to you?" he cried, "that you meet me with so false an accusation? Is this the reward of all my services? I demand your author—and will hold him so strictly to account, that he will scarce again dare to belie me."

In his energy he compressed her wrist so closely, that she could with difficulty prevent an exclamation of pain. With an unusual display of strength she wrested her arm from his grasp.

"Is this the mark of affection?" she asked, pointing to the red finger-marks on her wrist.

"Do you want to drive me mad, woman?" he cried, stamping violently on the floor, as his anger gained control. "Who is your authority, I say? What do you mean by such a charge?"

"My authority is of the best. What it is I will not say," she replied, defiantly. "If you would know my meaning, it is this. You, and you alone, arranged the abduction that has so long deprived me of my liberty. You, and you alone, are responsible for my imprisonment in that horrible prison, and for the insults to which I was there subjected. You alone arranged the scheme by which I was to be basely accosted by a drunken villain, your associate—and from whose hands you pretended to rescue me. You cajoled me into flying from my friends under the plea that they were my foes. You induced me to consent to this imprisonment, by a tissue of the basest falsehoods. Ah! how blind I have been, not sooner to have seen through the transparent web of your deceit; not sooner to have hurled back your proposals with the scorn they deserve!"

"It is false—false as hell!" he shouted, heedless of caution in his anger. "He who told you so is a liar, who shall yet suffer the full weight of my revenge. Who was it? You shall answer me! That boy—it is he who has been amusing you with this absurd story!"

"No, no," she cried, revealing in her anxiety to screen the boy that he was indeed her informant. "I needed not to be told. The full weight of your treachery dawned upon me without need of an informant."

"It is a lie," he replied, losing all sense of courtesy in his rage. "I see in your face, in your whole manner, that I have the boy to thank for this story. I will make him sorry enough for his tattling tongue."

"You will not! You dare not," she exclaimed, springing half toward him, eager to screen the boy from the cruel fury that burned in the speaker's eye.

"You believe the pretty story you have just related," he said, scornfully, "yet think I will not, and dare not, punish a boy for making me out a traitor?"

"You are a traitor," she replied, letting anger overcome discretion. "I have not told half your treacherous falsehoods. Your villification of Harry Graham is a deep offence I could never forgive you for, though I should believe all your other crimes virtues."

"Of Harry Graham?" he inquiringly asked, the glow of anger having quite disappeared from his features, and been replaced by a cold, vindictive look far more dangerous than the most violent explosion of fury.

"Yes," she replied. "He, the most earnest and true of men, that I should believe him false and treacherous! I hate myself to think that I allowed your base tongue to turn me for a moment from one whom my soul told me could not be other than true. How I suffered, how I mourned his treachery more than my loss! I could have borne the latter and suffered on in silence. The former was gall and wormwood to my soul. And now to learn that it is all a lie, that he I love is here, in constant, untiring search of me! Oh! John Passmore, you have sinned almost beyond redemption in this base and cruel lie!"

"By my soul, woman, do you think I am made of wood and iron, that you continue to pour out your spleen on me so fluently? What do you know of Harry Graham? You have now plainly brought the thing to that boy's infernal tongue. If I don't pay him for this—"

"You will not, I say," she cried; "I am no weak girl, to be longer made a fool of by your specious tongue. These days of imprisonment and of deep thought and suffering have made a woman of me, a woman of bitter experience. One, alas! fitted to read the souls of men as false as you," she said, with a sad smile.

"There is enough of this," he replied, with a coldness of tone in strong contrast to his former impassioned earnestness. "Do I understand that you mean by all this preamble a rejection of my suit!"

"You may understand it so."

"And do you imagine that a man such as you wish to make me, can be so easily answered?"

"I prefer not to discuss the question," she replied, warmly, sinking into a seat; "and pray that you leave me. I did not court this scene—and hope no more need be said."

"Nothing need be, except that I have no intention of taking such an answer. You are a little beside yourself to-day, Alice, and I have no doubt you will come to your senses again by evening. I will not accept an answer so wildly delivered. You cannot but accept my suit. Marry me you must and will. This evening I appoint for the ceremony, and caution you to prepare yourself for a prudent compliance with my wish—or it may be worse for you."

"What," she falteringly said, "am I to understand by this that you intend to force me into a marriage against my will? That I have been imprisoned here to be made the victim of a crime more atrocious than any of which I have accused you?"

"Understand what you will," he coldly replied. "You have villified and insulted me to your heart's content. It is my turn now. My wife you shall be before midnight."

With a smile of cruel meaning, he opened the door and disappeared from her sight.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

STEALING THE BRIDE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY CLARE VERNON.

The incident I am about to relate occurred about seventy years ago in the Nutmeg State, otherwise, the State of Connecticut. One of the principal actors was my great-great-uncle. The story was related to me by his grand-niece, my mother.

Thomas Colby, or, as he was more familiarly called, Tom Colby, my great-great-uncle, was a grave man, never given to playing jokes, and not particularly fond of receiving them. He was an educated, aristocratic man; dignified and manly in his deportment, and remarkably handsome, if we may consider as such a stately, erect figure, large, brown, eloquent, jet-lashed eyes, hair the hue of a North American Indian, with a wave and curl perfectly irresistible, straight patrician features, and a rare smile.

Tom was quite a favored one among the ladies; for his attentions were always delicate and well-timed. But some of the young men, those addicted to rowdyism, more especially, evinced quite a dislike for him, because they knew he disapproved of their career, and did not participate in their revels. This was owing partly to the fact that he considered them promoters of immorality; and partly because he could extract no enjoyment from them. He was, indeed, one of those rarely-to-be-found specimens—a man who loathed roughness and vulgarity, and delighted in delicacy and refinement.

You must not suppose that he was an old fogy, who in his youthful days had been one of the b'hoys, and had sown all his wild oats during that period, and was now seeking to obviate the reaping of a very luxuriant harvest, by moralizing and abstaining from the follies which delighted him in the past. Oh, no, he was barely twenty-five, and he was no carpet-knight either, this great-great-uncle of mine, but as thoroughly manly as one could wish a father, brother, husband, or lover to be.

He was not wealthy; but was possessed of a competency; was industrious, and as shrewd as any of his countrymen. It was generally believed that he would be an old bachelor. Not that he was averse to the society of young ladies, on the contrary he was a most assiduous cavalier, but because it was not expected he would ever find a maiden perfect enough to win his regard.

Many fair ones angled for him, for Tom was a goodly fish although an exceeding wary one, by becoming very sedate and prim whenever he made his appearance; others, by inveighing loudly against all frivolity when conversing with him, who were the very quintessence of it themselves. But Colby, as we have before remarked, was shrewd; he understood all this, and valued it at just what it was worth. He abhorred deception; and believed that every one should appear natural, and not seek to delude people into the belief that they were patterns of propriety when, all the time, they were longing to outrage this same said propriety. He was not sure he liked quite so much propriety, either; certainly not, if it were affected.

He was more and more inclined to that opinion, when he met Sadie Granger, after she came home from boarding-school. Her rightful name was Sarah; yet, although nicknames were by no means as common than as they are now, no one would have thought of calling the merry, laughing, dancing witch by the formal name of Sarah. Before two weeks had elapsed, after her return, it was apparent to all that the predestined old bachelor, Thomas Colby, Esquire, was completely enthralled by mad-cap Sadie.

Their acquaintance began in a rather singular manner. Colby was one day walking by Squire Granger's residence, thinking of anything else, and anybody else but Sadie Granger, when shouts of laughter from a dozen red-lipped girls, greeted his ears, and a merry, but unfamiliar voice cried,

"Shame, Tom! I'll wager a kiss, you couldn't wash *my* face! Take that!" and a snow-ball hit Colby plump on the cheek.

"She's rather forward," thought he, "if that's Sadie Granger. However, that challenge shall not go unaccepted by me;" and leaping the fence, he was in the midst of a group of girls and boys engaged in playing snow-ball, occasionally varying the sport by washing each other's faces. Those who knew him, greeted him with loud shouts and a perfect deluge of snow-balls. Tom made his way through them, until he stood by Sadie Granger, who had, as soon as she saw the stranger, desisted from play, and said,

"Miss Granger, I accept your challenge; and shall exact payment, if I win the wager," stooping as he spoke, and gathering a handful of snow preparatory to commencing the formidable task.

The rest had now ceased playing and were watching the two, Miss Granger and Mr. Colby. They had not supposed them to be acquainted, and were, therefore, considerably surprised. Not more so than Miss Granger, however, who viewed my respected great-great-uncle with mute astonishment and displeasure. At length, in a contemptuous tone, she said,

"Don't presume to touch me, sir; and be obliging enough to state, why you are in my father's yard offering me this insult?"

Poor Tom felt extremely uncomfortable, but he stood his ground, and said,

"I meant no insult, miss—I merely accepted the challenge you gave me."

Sadie's dark-blue eyes fairly flashed, and her face changed from pink and white to an indignant red, as she cried,

"*I* challenge *you*? *You*—"

But before she could finish the offensive sentence, one of her friends advanced and said,

"Wait, Sadie. This gentleman is Mr. Colby, Mr. Thomas Colby—and probably, when you called to Tom Barton, he fancied you meant him."

"But I was certainly hit by a ball," said Colby. "Who threw that?"

"I did," said little Johnnie Granger. "I wanted to see you jump. But I didn't think you'd get mad about it."

"I'm not angry, Johnnie," replied Colby. Then turning to Sadie he said: "I am heartily sorry for the annoyance I have caused. I will now rid you of my disagreeable presence." But Sadie held out her white-mittened hand and said:

"Oh, Mr. Colby, please forgive my rudeness, and tell me if you are *truly* the Tom Colby who used to draw me to school on his sled ages ago?"

"The very same," said Colby, taking the hand and bowing over it. "May I call this evening?" he asked in an aside.

Sadie answered affirmatively; and he went rejoicing on his way, thinking what a very lovely girl his former playmate had become.

When the Winter festivities began, Colby installed himself as Miss Granger's escort. Oh, the tricks she played and the saucy way she treated him. It would have been worth more to you than a whole apothecary's shop to have watched her games; for "fun is better than physic," and any one who failed to extract fun from her pranks would have been possessed of risibles that needed no control.

One night they were driving home from an entertainment at which Sadie had been almost torturing Tom, as was her admirable

custom. But she was quite demure and silent now, and Tom congratulated himself that his tormentor had foresworn her tantalizing proclivities, and intended, for the future, to be a dear little blessing. Mistaken man! his dream of bliss was short, for even while he was indulging in it, Sadie dropped her handkerchief. Colby sprang out to recover it, handing Sadie the lines as he did so, for the horses were fiery. Hardly had his feet touched the snow when Sadie chirruped to the horses, and the sleigh glided away with the speed of the wind. Colby regained the innocent handkerchief and started in pursuit. Think of it! Two swift steeds bearing his nice new sleigh and his lady-love relentlessly from him. Was not that sufficient to reader a man desperate without the addition of a mocking laugh?

Colby felt assured by that laugh that Sadie was in one of her moods, and that he need not expect her to halt, however, much he might desire it, until she reached her father's door. Accordingly, he set his wits to work. A short distance from where he was, the road suddenly went south, until it merged in a road that led to the north, thus partly enclosing a piece of land, the shape of a triangle. Across this point, Colby knew to be barely one-third the distance around it. If he could reach the opposite side before Sadie did, he would come off victor; if not, he would have to bear being laughed at, with what fortitude he could.

The sleigh was now out of sight, and Tom managed to reach the top of the snow which was on a level with that of the fences. Its surface was hard enough to prevent his sinking into fleecy depths, and soft enough to keep him from slipping, as he ran over it at his greatest speed. He was fortunate enough to reach the goal first, for Sadie being so far in advance of her pursuer, and not thinking of him taking the "cross-cut," had slackened her horses' speed, to enable her discomfited lover to overtake, her sufficiently, to allow her making merry at his expense. But to quote the often-repeated lines—

"The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley."

So Sadie's, though they were not particularly well-laid, certainly did "gang agley," for before she came in sight, Colby had reached the road, and was waiting for her. She saw him, and wisely gave up the contest. Checking her steeds, she saucily called out—

"Don't you want to take a sleigh-ride, Mr. Colby?" "Yes, thank you," said Colby, "and here is a young lady's handkerchief; do you happen to know the owner?" handing it to her, as he sprang into the sleigh and gently took the lines from her relaxing grasp. Then he took her cold, little hand in his.

"Why, are you afraid I will run away again?" questioned Sadie.

"I should be, if I intended to allow you an opportunity," replied Tom. Then clasping her hand still more warmly, he cried—

"Sadie, won't you give me the right to hold your hand, forever? Won't you give me this dear hand, and tell me that you love me, that you reciprocate my affection. Sadie, speak and tell me that you do not hate me. Tell me whether you are willing to join your future life to mine. You are weeping. How have I offended you, dearest?"

"Oh, Tom," sobbed Sadie, "I do love you. But I cannot be your wife."

"Why?" questioned Colby, while jealousy whispered of an unknown rival.

"Oh, Tom, I should not think you would need to ask. Unsuited for each other as we are, we would quarrel within a week after the wedding," replied Sadie.

"No, darling, never! I could never speak harshly to you, for I love you, Sadie! I love you! You are the first that have ever heard those words, 'I love you,' fall from my lips. Be mine, and let no dark foreboding of future strife disturb our bliss," cried Colby.

"Dear Tom, I love you, but I cannot now promise to be yours. Come to-morrow, and then I will give you your answer," was Sadie's response. They were surprised to find that they had now reached Sadie's home. Colby secured the horses, lifted Sadie from the sleigh, and bore her to the door. Then retaining her for a moment in his arms, he left a kiss—the first kiss—a pure, sweet caress upon her lips; then murmuring, "my precious darling," he released her, and, after seeing her safely within the dwelling, turned away.

The next afternoon Sadie in her chamber was waiting, watching, for some one's coming. Tom's? No, whose then? Read, and you will know. At the boarding-school Sadie had left a lover. A boy about her own age, eighteen. His name was Louis Ellesmere. He and Sadie had been very good friends, and their friendship had deepened almost into love on Sadie's part, and wholly so on Louis's. There was quite an affecting scene at parting, and now Louis had written that he was coming to see his schoolmate Sadie. Had young Ellesmere sought our heroine's hand before she returned home, he would probably have gained it, for Sadie then *thought* she loved him better than life itself, but after meeting splendid, manly Tom Colby, her passion faded into a very commonplace liking. He, poor boy, however, was unconscious of this, and he was now coming to offer himself to the girl whom he firmly believed had not an equal on earth. Sadie guessed as much, and was determined to spare him the pain of a refusal, if possible. For this reason she would not give Colby his answer the night before, but had requested him to call this afternoon to receive it.

While she still sat by her chamber-window, she heard the jingle of sleigh-bells, and, looking out she saw that he whom she expected, but dreaded to meet, had come, and at no great distance, she espied Colby leisurely advancing. She ran down, welcomed Ellesmere warmly, drew him into the prettily furnished parlor, and bade him to be seated. Louis Ellesmere was of medium height; his eyes were large and blue; his hair was very light and silken-soft; his cheeks were as smooth and rosy as Sadie's own, and his brow was broad and white. Here was promise of a grand manhood, which was not blighted, for he became an honorable and upright man.

But to return. Before Louis had time, even had he wished to be so precipitate, to declare his love, Tom Colby was ushered into the room by Mrs. Granger, who then left the young people to their own devices.

"Mr. Colby," said Sadie, "allow me to present my friend, Mr. Ellesmere. My promised husband, Mr. Colby, Mr. Ellesmere." Louis's cheek grew white almost as the glistening snow, and he fairly gasped for breath, when the knell of his hopes fell upon his ear.

You who have mourned over slighted vows and unrequited love, you who have seen the idol of *your* affections torn from you, to lavish upon another the love you would have prized, oh! so highly; you who have crushed down your hearts to hide their emotions from the rude, heartless eye of an unsympathizing world, and in solitude and secrecy have mourned over a shattered dream and have prayed in your agony to die, you can weep for and pity, you can feel the awful bitterness, the terrible despair that filled the heart of Sadie Granger's boyish lover when he realized that his love-dream was over, and that Sadie could *never* be anything to him.

After the introduction, and while they were conversing in a constrained manner, Johnnie Granger, Sadie's brother, came to the door and said:

"Mr. Colby, father wants you to come out to the barn a minute."

After Colby had gone, Louis arose, came up to Sadie, took her hand and gazed for a moment into her eyes, then said, as he dropped her hand and turned to go, "Good-bye, Sadie, good-bye," that was all, and he was gone before Sadie could scarcely murmur a reply.

"For oh! to look in eyes that hold
Our all of earthly light,
And pray to meet a glance less cold,
A smile less calmly bright,
Is not this misery?"

When Tom returned he asked, "Where is your friend?"

"He is gone," replied Sadie.

Colby looked searchingly into her face and said:

"Ah, I see. Oh, Sadie, you have made me a very rich man. Poor boy! But I cannot mourn your loss, as it is my gain."

Sadie replied by bursting into tears and sobbing out her sympathy for Louis.

That evening, after the juvenile portion of the household had been sent journeying to the land of Nod, Colby and Sadie made their appearance in the sitting-room. The squire's portly figure, with its bald head and good-natured, sensible-looking face, was deposited in a large chair, directly in front of the fire-place, where the back-logs and fore-logs, resting on the polished andirons, roared and crackled, sending an uncertain, cheerful light throughout the room and numerous little sparks upon the white floor, which the squire was busily engaged in putting out with his stockinged feet. While Mrs. Squire, of whom Sadie was but a younger edition, with a basket of stockings by her side, was busily engaged in mending them. Mrs. Granger believed "that a stitch in time saves nine," and she lived up to her belief.

Sadie and Tom stood before the just-described couple, and Tom said:

"I love your daughter, and she has promised to be my wife. Have we your sanction?"

The squire looked mildly upon the pair before him and said:

"You *are* grown up. It seems just a little while since you were mere children. But bless you, I'm willing to have you marry if you wish to. What say you, mother, eh?"

"I would sooner thee would marry Sarah, Thomas, than any one else. But how can I give thee my daughter?" And two bright tears chased each other over the plump cheeks and fell in the drab-colored lap. "How can I give thee my daughter?" Oh! womankind, oh! mother-hearts, how many crosses you are called upon to bear! "But sit thee down, Thomas; sit thee down, Sarah, my child," said the mother. They complied, and she then asked: "When dost thou wish for the wedding?"

"Christmas," said Colby.

"Oh! no, Tom, not so soon as that. I couldn't begin to be prepared by that time," cried Sadie.

"No, Thomas. I cannot spare thee Sarah yet," cried the mother.

"A year from Christmas, Colby, you may claim your bride, but not now," said the squire.

Colby finally yielded; and the wedding was appointed to take place just one year from the fast-approaching Christmas.

Winter soon stormed himself away; and Spring clothed the brown earth with a green robe. Then Summer, with her feverish breath, chased away the fast-fading Spring, and reveled awhile, until compelled to yield to Autumn, who colored the leaves of Spring and Summer a royal purple, a golden brown, a blushing red. Then Winter, tired of reigning only among icebergs, came with his train of howling winds and storms, and accompanied by his fair daughter the snow. Yes, the year was at an end, and it was Christmas-Eve; the wedding night of Sadie Granger and Thomas Colby.

Sadie said it seemed to her scarcely a day since she had celebrated Christmas. But Tom declared that it had been an eternity.

There had been some disagreement, between Tom and Sadie, concerning the guests who were to be invited. Sadie wished to invite a party that Tom was determined should not be present. One reason was, that among them was a young man who had paid Sadie a few attentions before the engagement. I am afraid that my great-great-uncle was possessed of a rather jealous disposition. Well, after many discussions on the subject, Sadie gave up, or appeared to, for she said no more about it.

Yes it was the wedding-night, and the guests were all assembled. In her own apartment, Sadie was being arrayed for the ceremony by her bridesmaid, while her mother looked on, and wondered. At length she exclaimed,

"Sarah, my child, where did thee get thy love of dress? when thy father is a Presbyterian, and thy mother a Friend?"

"Why, mother," said Sadie, in reply. "I'm afraid father and you both have a concealed love of fine clothing."

"Child how canst thou talk so? Dost thou not know it is sinful for thee to accuse thy parents of deceit?" remonstrated the mother.

"Dear mother, forgive me—I meant no wrong!" cried Sadie, throwing her arms around her mother's neck, and kissing her affectionately.

The reader will, perhaps, imagine that the toilet must have been very gay and costly to have called forth such a discussion. But no; the dress was but a simple muslin. But it was made with short sleeves and low neck; the neck and sleeves being trimmed with lace. It was the way it was made, and the trimming, of which the mother disapproved.

Half an hour afterward, Sadie Granger stood in the centre of the parlor, by her lover's side, whose dark eyes spoke of unalloyed happiness, surrounded by her friends, and uttering the marriage vows which transformed her into Mrs. Colby; and, I have no doubt, looked very beautiful, notwithstanding her dress had no train, and her form was not disfigured by panniers, nor her face with powder and rouge. For this, you must remember, was nearly a century ago, "All in ye olden time."

Well, the ceremony was over; the bride had been kissed; the congratulations been given; and the company prepared to enjoy themselves. With music and dancing? No; they found enjoyment in simple pleasures—such as,

"The mimic marriage, brought about
By leaping over the broom;
The game and play of 'Blind Man's Buff,'
And the laugh which shook the room."

In the midst of one of the games, it was discovered that Mrs. Colby was missing. Nothing was thought of it for some time. But after several games had been played, and she did not make her appearance, two of the girls ran to her room. They soon returned and reported that it was vacant. Instantly all was confusion. They searched the house; and, mindful of the fate of Ginevra, looked into every chest and box. But all in vain. "They sought her, they sought her, they found her not!"

At length her father said,

"It is my belief that she has been stolen."

"The bride is stolen! The bride is stolen!" echoed from lip to lip. The mystery was solved, and they prepared to pursue the abductors and bring back the abducted one. Tom's suspicions fell upon the uninvited party. He had no doubt that George Carlyle (the young man of whom we have before stated he was jealous,) was the ring-leader; and there was a look upon his face that betrayed the evil passions of jealousy and revenge that were striving in his breast to gain the mastery over his better feelings.

In a short time, the masculine portion of the company were driving furiously in all direction, in order to recover the bride, that their party might not be entirely spoiled; and the feminine portion were left to amuse one another in a rather melancholy fashion, and awaiting events.

Lest some of my readers should not have heard of the ancient practice of stealing the bride, I will inform them that it was customary, in the days of which we write, when there was a wedding, if there were any who were not bidden, for them to watch their opportunity, and carry off the bride to some hotel, taverns they were then called, and there have a party of their own. This was of rare occurrence, for invitations were generally sent to all who could lay claim to an acquaintance.

About a fortnight before Christmas, two young men were seated in the bar-room of the Old Continental, a tavern about ten miles distant from E——, the village where Sadie Granger lived.

"George," said one, "your old sweetheart is going to be married. Are you invited to witness the ceremony?"

"No," replied George; "are you?"

"No, I'm not," said the other. "What d'ye s'pose 'a the reason?"

"Don't know, Joe; Colby always did invite me whenever he had anything of the inviting to do; and Sadie always has associated with the same company we have. I don't understand it," said George, tipping his chair back, the better to look at Jo.

"I do then. Colby's jealous of you," said Joseph Belknap.

"Oh, no, he wouldn't be so foolish," said George. "Sadie and I never cared for each other."

"I tell you, that *is* just the reason," persisted Joe.

"I guess not; I never have paid any attention to the future Mrs. Colby since the engagement. Besides, all the young people of M—— are slighted, as well as myself. If Colby was jealous of me, he would have invited the rest and left me out in the cold," said George.

"Would he, though, George Carlyle? No, I guess he wouldn't. He wouldn't want every one laughing about his jealousy. So he intends it to be understood as 'one grand snub,' as 'Monsieur' would say. But we're going to pay him handsomely for it by stealing the bride," said Joe, looking at his companion to see how he received the communication.

"I wouldn't," said George, after a moment's pause. "I wouldn't, Joe."

"Why?" said Joe.

"Because," said George, "the enjoyment you would have wouldn't pay for the hard feelings it might occasion; and then, Miss Granger might be displeased, for all she's so fond of a frolic. I wouldn't have anything to do with it. You'll be sorry, if you do."

"Oh, no, I won't. You're mistaken about Sadie Granger's being displeased, anyway, for she was the one that suggested it to me," said Joe.

"You're joking now," said George.

"No, I'm not," replied Belknap. "I'll tell you how it was. I met Sadie in E——, the other day, and joked her about the wedding. Said I was coming."

"'No, you're not,' said she, 'for you've received no invitation. It's not my fault. I wanted all my acquaintances in M—— to be present, but Mr. Colby thought there would be too many for convenience. I'm going to invite you all, anyway; but that's the reason you haven't received invitations sooner.'

"'I don't think we'll accept them. I guess,' said I, jestingly, 'we'll have to consider ourselves aggrieved, and take revenge by stealing you, and having a jolly time of our own.'

"'Oh, do,' said she. 'I wish you would. It would be such fun, and would pay Tom for his—his being so old-maidish.'"

"So before we parted, we had it all arranged that Christmas Eve we were to have the young folks all here, and at nine o'clock two or three of us were to be at her house. At nine o'clock precisely she would be in the hall. We were to seize her and convey her here in a sleigh, and have a grand old ball and a splendid supper. I've notified the girls and boys, and I came here to make arrangements about our room and refreshments. What do you think of that? You may consider yourself invited. By the way, George, how did you come to be here? I thought you were not coming home until next week? I'll take you to M—— in my sleigh, if you're ready to go."

"Oh, I changed my mind, and so I'm here. I shall gladly avail myself of your offer. When do you start?" said George, who had listened attentively while Belknap was speaking.

"Well, as I've arranged with the landlord, if you're ready, we'll go," said Mr. Belknap.

"Yes, I'm ready," said Carlyle; "start as soon as you like. But about that affair; maybe I'll come, after all. If Miss Granger is in favor of it, why should we object?"

Accordingly the scheme was carried out. At nine o'clock Sadie slipped into the hall; the door was open, and Joseph Belknap carried her out, just as she was, and placed her by his sister in a large sleigh.

The night was so intensely cold that the sleigh could not be heard, and the air seemed to be full of tiny daggers that pierced the lungs and almost took away the breath when one attempted to breathe.

But Joe wrapped Mrs. Colby's form in numerous shawls and cloaks, and his sister drew a hood upon the fair young head. Then the buffalo-robes were put over and around her in such quantities that being cold was out of the question, though suffocation did not seem entirely impossible. All this time the horses had been driven rapidly forward.

"Oh, isn't this fun?" cried Sadie, speaking thickly from beneath her coverings.

"Yes," said Rachel Belknap. "But you won't think so when your lord finds you and gives you a good lecture before us all."

"I guess there isn't much danger of that," said Sadie, and Rachel continued:

"But I declare, I haven't offered my congratulations."

"Neither have I," said Joe.

"Nor I," said the driver.

"Well, you'd better keep them until we reach the Old Continental, for I'm not in a position to receive them, nor you to offer them creditably to yourselves," replied Sadie.

They all laughed at this, and imagined the surprise of the company when they discovered the bride's absence.

When they reached the Continental, Sadie and Rachel were shown into a warm room. They divested themselves of their wraps; and, after making themselves presentable, adjourned to the ball-room. Here Sadie was surrounded, deafened by congratulations, and smothered with kisses. Then the fiddlers began to play; and three score or more youths and maidens began "to chase the glowing hours with flying feet."

After the supper of roast beef, turkey, pumpkin pie, mince pie, plum pudding, etc., etc., etc., as Sadie was seated, almost wearied out, for it was near morning, and she had danced unceasingly, talking to George Carlyle, a dozen young men unceremoniously entered the ball-room.

"There's your bride, Colby," said one of them to an excited, angry, frozen-looking individual. But Colby needed not to be told; for, as soon as he entered, he had seen his wife engaged in conversation with "that George Carlyle!"

Without deigning his companion a reply, he pushed his way savagely across the room. Sadie saw him coming, but Carlye, who was standing with his back to him, did not. He soon *felt* that Colby was there, however, for two fierce blows stretched him senseless upon the floor, and Mr. Colby stood glaring at him with jealousy-blinded eyes.

The music ceased; the dancers left the floor, for here was something more attractive than the "bewitching dance." One of the young men raised Carlyle's head, several of them called for water; others ordered Colby and his friends to depart; and all of them were very busy giving commands, that no one seemed in any especial haste to obey, while the young ladies looked on in amazed silence. Mrs. Colby had been so bewildered, so startled, so indignant at what her husband had done, that for a time she could not speak. But at length she sprang to her feet, and cried:

"Why, Thomas Colby! what do you mean? Are you a gentleman? I—"

"Are you a lady?" said Colby, fiercely, interrupting her. "If you are, ladies conduct themselves in a very unseemly manner. But I shall see that you do not dis—"

"Thomas Colby!" said Sadie, her face crimsoning with wounded pride at his insulting words, and shame that he should make such an exhibition of himself, "do not dare to use that word in connection with my name! You have chosen to be angry at a joke which you brought upon yourself by your jealousy, needless jealousy; and now you strike an unoffending man, and insult your wife. I am ashamed of you!" and Sadie had hard work to keep back the tears that were only too willing to flow.

Joseph Belknap now rehearsed the whole from the beginning to the end. Colby's anger cooled; he saw he had made a donkey of himself; he felt very cheap, and he would have sold himself for a sixpence—perhaps less.

By this time Carlye had recovered and was furious to return the blow given him; but his friends held him back, until at Colby's request they released him.

Colby's thoughts had travelled fast while Belknap had been speaking. He was a gentleman, and more than that he was a Christian; although he had conducted himself in a very unchristianlike manner. He was convinced that he had done wrong, and, although it was very bitter to do, he said:

"Mr. Carlyle you can strike me, but I shall not strike you. True I have insulted you by a blow, but I ask your forgiveness. I am very sorry I forgot myself and struck you. I can hardly hope you will pardon me."

If the company had been astonished when Colby made the attack, they were still more astonished when he apologized.

Carlyle did not hesitate a moment, but extending his hand, said: "Think no more about it." Truly "a soft answer turneth away wrath."

Tom pressed the proffered hand and then turned to where Sadie was sitting, for she could not stand, and kneeling down, said tenderly:

"Darling, I have treated you shamefully; but take me back, and I promise never to be guilty of doing such a wrong again."

Sadie's heart swelled; her eyes became moist; she said nothing, but Colby seeing the forgiveness in her face, put his arm around her and his face close to hers, and whispered:

"If you can forgive me, kiss me; for oh, dearest, my heart is very sore for the mortification I have caused you."

Sadie forgot the many eyes that were gazing upon her; forgot her momentary resentment, and throwing her arms around her husband's neck, she kissed his penitent lips.

After a brief silence, Joe Belknap said:

"Let's give three cheers for Carlyle, for his magnanimity in forgiving a blow."

"Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" rang out from every throat, male and female.

"Now, three for Colby, for his nobility and moral courage in acknowledging that he had done wrong, and in asking forgiveness."

"Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" rang out, louder than before.

"Now, three times three for the bride, for being the dearest little woman in the world."

"Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!"

"Again," cried Joe.

"Hurrah, hurrah! hurrah!"

"Now, with all your might!" And the "Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" pealed out in such a volume that the landlord hurried to the room and growled:

"What are you howling your lungs out for, awakening my lodgers and deafening every one with your noise?"

No one answered him but Joe, for they were too much exhausted to do so, and he said:

"Don't bother! we're neither drunk nor crazy, only happy, and we're going home now, and won't disturb you any longer."

And they went.

Two years after, one night as Sadie was recovering from an attack of sick headache, and Tom was walking the floor with the crying baby, patiently endeavoring to quiet it, while the clock ticked on toward midnight, Sadie said:

"I believe it would be as impossible, Tom, to make you scold as it was the old man's wife."

"How was that?" cried Tom, while Master Baby, being out of breath, hushed his cries for a moment.

"Why, an old man was once boasting to his neighbor that *his* wife never scolded, and that nothing could make her do so. 'Well,' said the neighbor, 'I'll tell you what will. Draw home a load of crooked wood. My wife seldom scolds, but when I furnish crooked wood she does. Try that, and I'll warrant she'll scold enough to suit you.' The old man said he would. A week after the neighbor met him again and asked how it came out. 'Why,' said the old man, 'she didn't say anything about it. So, after awhile I asked her how she liked that wood. "First-rate," said she, "it curls round the kettle so nicely."'"

Tom laughed and baby lifted up his tiny note of defiance.

"I've had one lesson, and I hope I'll never need another. I hope I'll never lose my temper again."

I hope he never did. Don't you?

☞ THE ORIGIN OF A POPULAR SAYING.—"What do you mean, Colonel?" said S. S. Cox to Fisk, "by the place where the woodbine twineth?" To which interrogatory Fisk responded: "You see I was before that learned and dignified body, the Committee on Banking and Currency, and when Garfield asked me where the money got by Corbin went to, I could not make a vulgar reply and say 'up the spout;' but observing, while peddling through New England, that every spout of a house or cottage had a woodbine twining around it, I said, naturally enough, where the woodbine twineth."

☞ A lawyer and a parson were talking about which way the wind was. The former said, "We go by the court-house vane." "And we," replied the parson, "go by the church vane." "Well," said the lawyer, "in the matter of wind that is the best authority;" and the parson went to cogitate.

☞ Professor.—But is the heat in the fire? Senior (dodging.)—Heat is rather indefinite. Prof. (forcing.)—Is the fire hot, or are you? Sen.—I am. Prof.—Then the heat is in yourself? Sen.—Oh, yes. Prof. (triumphant.)—Well, now, is the *green* in the grass? Sen. (innocently.)—No, sir; it is in yourself. Prof. (after a pause.)—Hem; we do stumble upon a witticism sometimes. —*Harvard Advocate.*

☞ A gentleman in Kansas had a reception at his house the other evening, and when the guests went away, it took him all night to wash the tar and pick the feathers off his person.

☞ A sore-eyed reader of an Iowa sheet complains that it is printed in a cheese-press, with shoe-pegs for type.

☞ The Pennsylvania Railroad Company offers $10,000 and a life pass over their lines to any one who will impart information leading to the detection of the parties guilty of a recent attempt to throw a train from their tracks.

LARRY'S HUT.

BY MARK HARDCASTLE.

Our cottage stands a quarter of a mile from the village, separated from the highway only by the trim little lawn in which my mother and Nellie and I cultivate our favorite plants and shrubs. But I could see neither plant nor shrub as I stood at the hall-door on this Sunday I am going to tell of, for the heavy darkness of the November evening had engulfed them all. I watched the last glimmer of the lantern which the maid carried as she walked with my mother and Nellie to church; then I drew back into the hall with a shiver of relief, and locked and bolted the door. The drawing-room was warm and bright and snug, but my first act was to poke the fire into a still more cheerful blaze. Then I sat idly before it for a time. I pictured my mother alone in our seat in church; and Nellie at the harmonium, taking my place because I was not well enough to go out to-night. Then I wondered whether Mr. Carr, our young unmarried rector, would walk home with them after service, as he was very fond of doing when Nellie was there. Whether Mr. Carr came or not, I had no fear for them through that walk from the village; I should have laughed if any one had suggested such a thing to me. We knew every villager well; we even knew by sight the men who were felling the trees on the heath, for in our long winter walks we often passed them, either at their work, or resting, with their pipes, in the shelter of Larry's hut—a wretched little shed enough, too, to be the only shelter they could get on the bleak upland.

It was not very likely I should begin to fear for my mother and Nellie, when this was the seventh winter we had spent in this village in perfect safety and peace. Peace! Was it really peace for all of us? The word, so wide and calm and wonderful in its meaning, was hardly yet my own to grasp and keep. There were times when I felt that it would come, and that my life need not be a listless or an idle one; but there were other times when I fancied it was no nearer to me then it had been on that day, a year ago, when the news had come to me—to me first of all, as I stood at the garden-gate in the sunshine!—that Alick had been drowned on his way home to me. Ah me, where had the sunshine gone when I crept back to the house, wrapped in the chill gray mist? And at such times the fingers of my right hand would close upon his diamonds, and my heart burn and quiver in the cruel grasp of its overmastering sorrow. It would have been so much easier, I thought, to be patient and content if I could have had Alick's last glance and last words to remember. If I had been able to recall those, instead of that horrible solitude of the storm-driven sea, and the utter loneliness of Alick's death.

I rose from my seat before the fire—my thoughts should not wander in the old sad way on this Sunday night—and went to the piano to sing; drifting at last, as I generally did, into the beautiful hymn which pleads for those in peril on the sea. Then the tears, that come so often to my eyes now, welled up and fell upon my fingers; on Alick's ring; on the diamonds I loved so dearly, because they told me always of the wealth and richness of his love, and of the brightness and purity of the home in which I tried to follow him now with my longing thoughts. The notes swam before my eyes, so I bent my head upon the music-desk and let the tears have their own way. The room was hushed and still, the whole house was wrapped in silence, when I heard a knocking at the front-door; not loud, but long and hurried. A quivering pain ran through me for an instant, less like fear than a foreboding, and, with my heart beating heavily, I sat motionless while the sound died away. If it should be repeated I must go. The silence had hardly settled, when it was broken once more; this time the summons was even quicker and more hurried than before, and I did not hesitate another moment.

"What is it?" I inquired, nervously, before I opened the door, but with my fingers ready on the latch.

"Quick! open the door," said a man's voice, low and anxious.

"Why?" I asked, a hundred fears assailing me at once.

"Don't stop to question," returned the voice, sounding muffled, because the hurried words were uttered in a whisper. "Your mother has been taken ill in church, and they are carrying her home. Open the door and show a light. They will be at the gate in a moment."

Not an instant longer did my fingers hesitate on lock or bolt. I threw the door open wide, and turned hastily to fetch the lamp, my knees tottering under me, my heart beating rapidly in its fear. The man who had spoken to me through the closed door walked at once into the hall behind me; then, turning coolly round, he locked the door upon us both, and pocketed the key. In a lightning flash I understood the truth then, and for an instant cowered to the wall in a helpless panic of alarm. He came up to me, a painted mask covering his face except where the eyes shone through the paper sockets.

"All right now," he said, calmly, "don't bother about moving the lamp. I want its light in there for a bit. Come along."

But at the rude grip of the man's fingers on my left hand, my trembling helplessness fled, and I started from him with all my strength.

"I won't keep you long," he said, as he followed me into the lighted room, speaking in a rough, determined tone, which he was evidently trying to disguise. "At least it will be your own fault if I do. Pass me over that ring. That's all I want, so the quicker you are about it the better."

The immovable painted face was close to mine, and the savage, hungry eyes were fixed upon me behind their lifeless sockets. I felt—as my own eyes fastened themselves upon the repulsive face—that soon my senses must leave me, and I fought with this feeling as an animal fights with death.

"Never mind staring," exclaimed the man, roughly seizing my wrist once more. "You'll never make much out of my face; don't try. Hand me over the diamonds, and let me be off. I'd rather you did it than trouble me to help myself; not that I'll make much of a trouble of it, either. I'll give you two minutes from now, not a second longer. Set about it at once."

At first no words would come to my lips when I wanted them; but before the two minutes were over—so utterly weak was I, and so isolated from all help—I had begun to plead with this robber, begging him to take other things and leave me my betrothal ring. I really think I told him, in my fear and my distress, how the ring had been put upon my finger; how I had promised never to remove it; and how I never could through all my life, because Alick was dead. The words came tottering from my lips until they ended almost in a prayer, "Take my watch, or what you will, only leave me this."

"I don't want the watch," he answered, carelessly. "It might be a trouble to me, and I'd rather be without it. But the ring I've set my mind on. I've had my eye upon it once or twice when you played at church, and the lights fell on it. I've been watching for you to stay at home alone at night, and now I'm not going to be baulked, I can tell you. Now then, the two minutes are gone, and so is my patience."

"I shall never take this ring off," I faltered, locking my fingers tightly together, "*never*. I promised I never would. Do you expect," I cried, with a sudden change of tone in my despair, "to commit such a robbery as this and go free? In spite of your masked face, I could swear to you by your voice before any judge in England."

"I dare say," put in the man, with a short laugh, "when you happen to hear it before a judge. Wait till then. But my time's valuable just now. I'll take the ring myself, as you're so gingerly about breaking a promise."

I kept my hands from the man as long as I had any strength in them, but I was small and weak, and he was big and strong, so that it was but a slight delay, after all.

"Silly to waste the little strength you have," he muttered, contentedly, when he felt both my hands entirely captive in his powerful grasp. "What purpose has it served? See, it doesn't take me long to draw the ring off. I've known a tighter fit. Ah, ah, these stones are worth looking at; they do my eyes good. Cost a fortune once, I'll be bound, though it's a good while ago. They've been in somebody's family a many years, I guess; so it's about time they were in somebody else's. There, you haven't broke your promise, after all. Now I'll let myself out; and take my advice, bolt the door safely behind me, and don't open it again so innocently when you're alone in the house."

I stood quite still until the man had left; then—because he called to me that he should wait outside until I had locked myself in—I moved slowly to the door and turned the key. As I did so, a sudden idea, strong as a resolution, came into mind. I listened until I could hear no longer the sound of the heavy footsteps crushing the gravel; waited a few minutes longer to allow them to pass the gate; then, wrapping my black waterproof about me, I noiselessly opened the door and stepped out, closing it as noiselessly behind me.

The darkness gave me fresh courage; presently, I knew, my eyes would grow accustomed to it; and out in the road I should surely be able to see the figure in advance. I crept cautiously down the garden path, closed the gate behind me without the echo of a sound, and I was out in the turnpike road. No need to pause in doubt which way to turn. I felt very sure that the man would not walk toward the village with that ring about him, when he knew my alarm would be raised after service. No; he would take the opposite way, of course, and presently perhaps I should be able to distinguish him before me. I did not fear being seen myself; my black dress and cloak made me like a part of the universal darkness which surrounded me. But still I took the precaution of keeping close to the hedge bank, while I pierced the gloom before me with my eager, searching eyes. I have a keen, far sight, and presently I was able to distinguish a form moving on in front which I knew must be the man who had stolen Alick's ring from me. Ah! what a desperate courage the consciousness of that loss seemed to have given me. All my love and sorrow and despair rose in a kind of wild, impetuous bravery, shutting out just then all room for timidity. One idea alone possessed me. Could I let this thief take from my sight the ring with which Alick had made me his betrothed—as sacred to me since his death as if it had made me his wife? Could I bear to lose forever this precious pledge of his rich love and trust, as I had lost him a year ago? A cry hovered on my lips again and again as I thought of this, but it was not a cry of fear. On and on I went, walking noiselessly upon the grass beneath the hedge; only dimly seeing the line of road before me, only but very faintly descrying the dark figure on the gray line. Suddenly I missed it, and I started and stopped in bewilderment. How could it be? Had he crossed a hedge which I could never climb, and left me here even more helpless than I should have been if I had stayed at home? But I dared not waste a moment standing idle. I started again, still creeping cautiously on beneath the hedge, and trying hard to recall the bearings of this part of the road. By the help of the outline of a thick group of trees before me I could tell that I was now not many yards from a narrow, tree-shadowed lane, which had an ugly name in the neighborhood on account of a murder having been committed there, one winter night, upon a defenceless traveller who had ventured to shorten his way to the town by taking the near cut across the heath. Many times Nellie and I had walked up here on sunny Summer days, but always had each of us tacitly avoided it either in gloom or solitude. I hesitated at the turning, shrinking involuntarily from entering the dense darkness of the lane; but I knew it was my only chance of keeping the man in sight at all, for the lane opened soon again into a field which bordered the heath, and there I should be able to see him if—as I felt sure—he had turned here.

Looking back now upon that night, I do not remember that I was pursuing any definite plan, or indulging any definite hope. I think I only felt that to let this masked man escape me was to lose Alick's ring forever. Except in one or two horrible moments, I hardly realized the danger of what I was doing—I, a girl, alone in the darkness; no help within call now that the high road was left. The one great and intense longing to recover Alick's ring swallowed up most other thoughts; and now and then there flashed across me the conviction that the darkness was my safeguard.

In this steep, dark lane I had no need to shrink to the hedge bank; I made my way straight on as best I could, until suddenly a crackling of twigs startled me, and I drew back crouching against the hedge. Then memory came to my aid. The old gate which separated this lane from the field beyond was always kept fastened; and, besides that, between its upper bars thorns had been interlaced. My heart-beats ceased for a minute. The man must be climbing this gate now. The relief it gave me to find that I was so certainly upon his track was intense, but upon this came the terrible consciousness that I, too, should have to climb this gate; and should I ever be able to do it noiselessly? No, I dare not trust myself. Covered by the darkness of the lane, I crept forward and fixed my eyes upon where I knew the outline of the gate would be visible beyond the trees which closed in this lane. Just as it shaped itself to my eyes, a man's figure alighted on the other side and turned as if to disentangle something. A ghastly fear seized me when I found that I could see the large masked face; not, of course, plainly enough even to have told that it was masked unless I had known it before, but still sufficiently to give me a new fear for my own danger of discovery in this pursuit. A thought struck me. Feeling about the skirt of my mourning dress, I tore from it a wide strip of crape and tied it over my face. An entirely and wholly black figure now, I could venture out into the open field beyond this gate, as soon as I could feel sure that the man I was tracking would be quite out of earshot. Then I climbed the gate, my dress every moment getting entangled in the thorns, while the darkness—intensified so much by the covering on my face—and my own nervousness, made me stumble at almost every step after I had freed the gate and was attempting to run across the fields that I might as swiftly as possible gain the covert of the trees upon the heath.

I had allowed sufficient time, for there was no sign before me now of the dark figure I was pursuing. Once gain the shelter of the woody ground, and I felt I should be safe from the chance of being seen; while, if he crossed the heath on the cart-road beside the trees, I could follow him, being myself in safety. But though I sped rapidly on into the wood—my eyes aching and

burning in their strained gaze out into the wide gloom of the unsheltered heath—I could see no glimpse of the thief I had followed. I was hesitating a moment, baffled and bewildered, when the silence which surrounded me was suddenly broken by a muttered curse. I caught at a tree near me, knowing it would be death to me to cry or fall. The man was then close beside me; had stumbled, here quite near me, over one of the tree stumps which had so often interrupted my own steps. I staggered as I supported myself by the tree, trembling in every limb, and scarcely daring to draw my breath for fear of his discovering my proximity. A horrible fear overpowered me, which I had hardly had time to feel before now; a terrible consciousness of how entirely one step might put my life in this ruffian's power. Straining every sense I possessed in painful intentness, I heard the footsteps retreating on the rough soil toward the cart-road, and then all was silent again. A little higher up, across the road, I could distinguish now the outline of Larry's hut, and I moved on toward it; still keeping back among the trees, and still watching intently the strip of bare heath which lay between the wood and the hut. Exactly opposite the doorless entrance of the half-ruined shed I stopped, my ears aching and throbbing in the strain I put upon them, my eyes feeling as if the lids could never fit and cover them again.

But it was not very long before I saw a glimmer of light in the old hut. I leaned forward, my very breath muffled, as my eyes followed this speck of light which slowly moved about the shed. It showed me nothing, but it convinced me of the presence there of the man of whom I dreaded to lose sight. What was he going to do? My pulses throbbed with an acute pain as I waited to see. At last the light was still for a moment, then fell to the ground. But a candle, stuck in the wall beside the door, had first been lighted by it, and would have allowed me to distinguish many objects within the hut if I had cared to look away from the man's figure. He was standing before the candle now, with my ring on his hand, examining the stones, moving it that the flickering, glaring light should fall and be caught by every brilliant separately. Slowly and methodically, after his deliberate investigation, he folded a piece of soft paper round and round my ring, then turned, with the parcel in his hand, as if to leave the place again. His face—masked still—was raised now fully in my sight. Yes, he was coming away. Ah! could I follow him further still? My heart sank with a dead weight of utter hopelessness, but it was scarcely for more than an instant. He did not pass the doorway. Stopping just within it, he raised the hand which held the packet; and when, half a minute afterward, he brought his hand down, the packet was not in it. Then surely in some little crevice over the broken doorway he had hidden the ring, to lie in secure concealment until the alarm had blown over, and it might be safe to carry the stolen diamonds away. I thought all this, and yet I felt that every power I possessed was merged in that one strained effort to *see*. Once more the man I watched stood before the flaming candle. Drawing the mask from his face, he tore it into pieces and burned each piece separately, watching the ashes fall upon the turfy soil. Then he blew out the light leisurely, and came from the hut. And now it was to *hear* that I strained every power I possessed. The candle-light had robbed me of my power of seeing in the gloom for awhile; but I must be assured that he was safe in the distance before I ventured forth. Oh, thank Heaven! the footsteps faded in the opposite direction from that in which we had come. Evidently, the thief was going to take the short cut across the heath to the village, where I knew the men lived who were employed in felling these trees. He must be one of them, then, as I had guessed, for unless he had known that way very well, he would not have trusted to finding it in the darkness. Minute after minute I waited in my concealment, allowing him time to walk a quarter of a mile away before I would dare to leave the darkness of the wood, even in my black dress and with the black covering on my face. I could but have *heard* his steps in the distance, to have been sure that he was [illegible] snowdrops. I crept a few paces out upon the heath [illegible] able then paused; my heart thumping [illegible] could my side, great beads of perspiration [illegible] rrible ing on my forehead. He might be [illegible] tes of here close to the shed, keeping guard [illegible] weak- the stolen treasure; the intense and [illegible] could like silence seemed the very breathing [illegible] cause, treachery and hidden danger. Still [illegible] of that nearer the ground, and creeping noiselessly [illegible] intiful I went on a few steps further. Suddenly [illegible] often rose upright, with a swimming in my head [illegible] one and ears. I had fancied that I heard a [illegible] ring breath close to my ear. Only fancy; [illegible] le did crept on again. The open doorway [illegible] n my but at last; another step, and I was [illegible] d me Another step! but this step threw down a crazy old bench which must have been propped there, and the sound went out upon the heath with a noise, awful to me as a sudden thunder-clap. Great Heaven! if the robber should be prowling in the darkness near, and, hearing this should hasten in to see what it could be. If he should come and find me there, within the isolated hut; a feeble, panic-stricken woman, who had it in her power to witness against him *if he let her leave this place alive!* I caught at the doorpost to support myself. Every limb seemed powerless, yet still my ears were keenly listening for a returning footstep with the old strained eagerness. But no sound broke the silence which followed the fall of the timber, and presently a desperate courage came to me. Still holding fast to the doorpost, I raised myself by the loose timber which lay on the ground, and, supporting myself by one hand, groped along the boards above the opening with the other; groped round them, and above them, and behind them, while the cold drops fell from my face—uplifted in the darkness.

For some time this groping was to no purpose, but at last my searching fingers found a crevice between the jamb and the wall; and, moving slowly, slowly along in it, were stopped by a little roll of paper fitted tightly in one spot. This, then, was the parcel I had watched the man fold—this was Alick's ring—and I drew it from its hiding-place with hands that shook as if they were palsied. Could it be really mine once more? Alick's ring mine again!

Now I was free to leave this desolate solitude to go home. Home! what a long way off it was, and what danger might not now be lying in wait for me between it and this dreary spot. Ah! this new shrinking cowardice would never do. I had Alick's ring safe; the man of whom I was in terror had disappeared in another direction; I would fear nothing now. I said it again and again; yet, when I turned to leave the hut, an awful and overwhelming terror seized me lest the man whom I had myself watched had been watching me, and now was waiting for me out there in the darkness. I drew back, actually forgetting I was in darkness there and could not have been watched as he had been. I fancied I could hear that muttered curse repeated just outside the hut; then that a man's laugh burst out close to me there among the loose timber; I was growing to feel that I never could venture again alone upon the heath. Should I shriek for help, putting all the strength I had into one piercing cry? or should I lie motionless where I was? Now that the long tension of excitement was over, I was as helpless and nervous as a child.

I have no idea how long I had crouched at the back of the old shed—it must have been a long time even in reality, and seemed an endless time to me—when a sudden, nervous access of fear gave me the impetus I needed. The wind, in its unfettered race across the upland, had blown the piece of paper I had taken from my ring straight up against me to touch my very eyes. The terror this sudden rustling and touch gave me was childish, and over in a moment, but during that moment I had started from my position, left the hut, and was speeding on my way to the covert of the trees again. Even then, even in my black dress and in the heavy darkness, I could not trust myself to take the road. Again and again I stumbled and fell; again and again it seemed as if some fiendish power held me back and baffled me in my desperate haste. Had I ever known such darkness before this night? Had the skies ever seemed to give no glimmer of light before? Would the stile never come that led into that field beyond the heath? Surely I must have passed it, even though I was feeling my way as well as probing the blackness with my aching, burning eyes.

Ah! it was found at last. Across the field I went with dragging, feeble steps, and found the fastened gate out into the lane. But could I climb it, with the thorns so thickly interlaced there? I had never paused to doubt this on my way to the heath long hours ago; I would not pause to doubt it now. Even if I fell, the pain that I should suffer could not be greater than the pain that I was suffering then. What was this singing in my ears, this knocking in my head? One or two weak attempts, which failed; one last effort; and I was in the narrow, tree-darkened and sin-haunted lane, which I had never dared to tread alone even in the brightest day of Summer, and whose darkness now was like the darkness of a sealed grave. With both arms stretched out as far as I could reach, to keep my dark way clear, I crept feebly and slowly down this lane. I have often since tried to fancy the effect of meeting such a figure, enveloped from head to foot in black, and with arms spread like a phantom's.

So I came down the lane at a creeping pace, groping my way inch by inch. Only conscious—as it seems to me now—that I was passing the spot where an awful crime had been committed on such a night as this. Just when I could distinguish that I was near the end of this lane, just when I saw the break in the trees where the high road crossed the opening; I caught sight of lights passing before me slowly. But after having watched one human form for so long in terror and alarm, I shrank timidly from the chance of encountering others. They might be rough men, too; so the utter darkness and loneliness were best. But while I hesitated, I heard my own name shouted again and again; loudly, cheerily, anxiously, longingly.

"Olive!—Miss Lee!—Olive."

Ah, these were friends then, seeking me, come to save me. I clasped my hands above my head and tried to utter a moment's prayer of thankfulness. I tried to call in answer. But no sound came from my benumbed and stiffening lips. And then this utter incapacity to utter a cry began to frighten me almost more than all else. They were passing on. They would leave me there, not knowing they had been near me. Must I, even at the last minute, die alone there in the darkness? Yes; it must be, for my strength was spent at last.

Again I tried to call with all the power remaining to me, but the faint tone, like a whisper, which escaped my lips, left the silence undisturbed. There was only one chance left. I gathered up my little remnant of strength, and with the fleet, short-lived courage of despair, I ran. I think now that my running was as slow as others' walking, but I fancied then that I must be rapidly nearing those rescuers who again pierced the night silence with their calls to me. Only a few steps on before me now they were, moving very slowly and searching the wide road on either side with their lowered lanterns. I saw forms familiar to me. I saw Mr. Carr; I saw Nellie—nearest of all to me was Nellie. *One* last effort—only one now!

I came up behind Nellie; I turned to look into her face—and then I fell before her on [illegible] forever. Ah, how sweet to rest there, even in the glory above, he could love and trust me still.

"Awake again already?" smiled Nellie, as she came softly into my room and sat herself beside me on the bed; "I left you sleeping, and I've kept mamma away, and—"

"And what, Nellie?"

"Nothing," she answered, gently, laying her warm hand on my wasted one. "Do you guess who laid the snowdrops on your bed, Olive?"

"Of course I do. Nellie, I've been wanting you to come in—only you—I want you to take off this cap and let me look in the glass."

"What vanity," she smiled merrily, though I could see that her eyes saddened, too.

"I know I am made to wear it to hide my hair," I went on, trying to push it back with my feeble fingers. "Nellie, I'm not afraid of seeing. I know I had a great fear on that Sunday night when I—fell ill, and I am not too childish to hear that it—turned my hair—white."

Nellie's soft clear laugh was good to hear, and the glass was before me in a moment. "Why, Olive," she cried, bending impulsively to kiss me, "I never—we never imagined you would dream of such a thing as *that*. We only wanted to hide from you—just yet—that most of your hair had been cut off in your fever. There it is, you see, as bright as ever, only—only exceedingly short."

That was all, and I heaved a slow sigh of relief. There are few girls of twenty who would like to wake to the discovery that their hair is white, though—like myself—they may have lost all ambition for themselves as entirely as if it had whitened so from age.

"Now we will not say one word more about that night—yet," whispered Nellie, putting aside the glass, and then returning to me with her bright eyes very full of sunshine.

"Yes; one thing more," I pleaded, laying the fingers of my right hand tenderly upon Alick's ring. "I remember it all distinctly. I remember following—this, and finding it, and saving it; but I never put it on. I felt—I remember that I felt an if I had no right to put it on; and—once I dreamed—Nellie, who *did* put it on my finger when I was too ill to know?"

"Who should have done it?" Nellie asked, with a wonderful soft brilliance in her eyes. "Oh, don't ask me any questions, dear. Wait, and ask—mother."

Ah, I had no need to ask. Looking into Nellie's face, I read it all.

"It was Alick," I said, and the whispered words came from my heart like a prayer.

Yes, it was Alick! Oh, the sudden sunshine which those few words flung richly on all the years before me. Yes, it was Alick; and presently they let him come to me and tell me of his rescue from the sea. And he took my poor thin hand in his, and laid his warm brave lips upon it, but would not let me speak to him, even to tell him I had never broken my promise. Somehow he seemed to know it all quite well without my words.

Two things he told me afterward which I was very glad to hear. One was, that no one in the village could quite understand the mysterious, sudden disappearance of one of the men who had been employed on the heath. He had been the first to reach Larry's Hut on the Monday morning after my night walk, but had left it again before his companions came up to him, and had never been seen or heard of since. The other pleasant thing Alick told me, was, that he did not at all object to my short hair.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

THE CENTENNIAL—PHILADELPHIA AT WORK.—The first movement toward providing "material aid" for the Centennial Exposition of 1876 began November 18, in a way that was as satisfactory in its practical results as it was spontaneous and unexpected. A meeting of the Three Hundred Citizens appointed by the Centennial Board of Finance was called for consultation as to the plan to be adopted for securing in Philadelphia a large subscription to the stock authorized by Congress for the construction of the Exhibition buildings and other essential expenses, and to enlist the support of all the trade interests of the city. Whilst this purpose was under consideration in the committee, an impromptu movement was commenced for taking subscriptions from the members of the Committee who were present; and in a few minutes one hundred thousand dollars of the stock were subscribed for by forty-two of the gentlemen at the meeting. Had it been at all understood that subscriptions would have been commenced at this meeting there would have been, most unquestionably, a much larger attendance, and far more than the *pro rata* allotment to Philadelphia would have been subscribed on the spot. But the value of this spontaneous expression of the readiness of the members of the committee to reinforce their recommendation of a plan of action by leading off with their own subscriptions in advance of the formal opening of the books, shows that they understand that Philadelphia will be doing not only a graceful act by making this hearty beginning, but be discharging an incumbent duty by offering a much larger share of the necessary funds than would fall to her lot under the apportionment made by the act of Congress. It was well said by one of the sagacious bankers present that our city would not think of halting even at the amount allotted to the whole State under the Congressional act, but should be prepared to subscribe a million or two millions if there should be occasion for it.

On Thursday, Nov. 21, the subscription-books of the Centennial Board of Finance were opened throughout the United States. In answer to a question asked at the Centennial Committee meeting, on the 18th inst., concerning the way in which subscriptions to the stock are to be paid for, it may be well to state that payments are required as follows: two dollars on each share at the time of subscription: two dollars in May, 1873; two dollars in July, 1873; two dollars in September, 1873; and two dollars in November, 1873.

UNEASY FRANCE.—After the noble work France has done under the Thiers administration, in the recuperation of her prostrated industries—in demonstrating that her rich resources were not exhausted by the war which worked so much destruction within her borders—in paying off with such marvellous promptness so great a proportion of the Prussian war indemnity—after such noble manifestations as these of her energy and endurance, it is lamentable to read from day to day of the unsteadiness and lack of broad and dignified statesmanship among her rulers. We do not doubt that in the main the government of Thiers is the wisest for France at the present juncture. Nor do we doubt that some of those who oppose his policy and rule are actuated by patriotic motives, although they are doing great mischief, and placing their country in peril. But what a figure does that Government present! Opposition in the Legislative Assembly is pushed to the extreme one day, creating alarm and confusion, only to be withdrawn the next day under force of some external pressure. This has been done again and again within the last twelve months. And at such times the almost uniform proceeding of the President (Thiers) is to *threaten* to resign, which brings in its train an undignified and almost humiliating series of implorations from all quarters not to resign, and of recantations on the part of those who provoked the threat. Such frequent disturbances of political tranquillity, involving change of government, also involve social disquiet and business fluctuation, and are just the last thing France in her present condition should desire or tolerate. Such occurrences make the friends of France apprehensive that a revolution may break out at any moment, that will undo all the work of regeneration of the last two years, and leave the French people again in the prostrate condition which marked the close of the Prussian war.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.—The full returns of the Presidential election show that Grant and Wilson Electors have been chosen by thirty States, having 294 votes, and Greeley and Brown Electors by seven States, having 72 votes, a majority for Grant and Wilson of 222 votes.

The following are the Grant and Wilson States:—

Maine	7	Alabama	10
New Hampshire	5	Mississippi	8
Vermont	5	Arkansas	6
Massachusetts	13	Ohio	22
Rhode Island	4	Indiana	15
Connecticut	6	Illinois	21
New York	35	Michigan	11
New Jersey	9	Wisconsin	10
Pennsylvania	29	Kansas	5
Delaware	3	Iowa	11
Virginia	11	Minnesota	5
West Virginia	5	Nebraska	3
North Carolina	10	California	6
South Carolina	7	Oregon	3
Florida	4	Nevada	3
Total			294

The following are the Greeley and Brown States:—

Maryland	8	Kentucky	12
Georgia	11	Tennessee	12
Louisiana	8	Missouri	12
Texas	8		
Total			72

THE HORSE DISEASE.—The horse disease in this city has so far abated that there is not much sign of the malady either in the streets or in the stables. The railway companies have all their lines in operation. The estimated losses of three of the railway companies will give some general idea of the immense money loss caused by the epizooty in this city. Railway companies alone will lose between $125,000 and $150,000, if the proportion of losses is maintained on all lines. But possibly a greater loss fell upon drivers and conductors thrown out of employment, and the suspension of business and deaths in private stables would swell the aggregate loss to the community to very large proportions.

A new Atlantic cable company has just been organized in London, with a capital of $6,750,000. The line is to run to the West Indies and thence to New York. Telegraphic communication with Brazil is also contemplated. A contract for manufacturing and laying the cable for the sum of $6,650,000 has been signed, and one-third of this amount is to be held by the contractors in shares of the company. Ordinary messages between England and the United States, are to be paid for at the rate of twenty shillings for ten words.

A SOUTHERN CANAL.—The Governors of the Southern States have recently held a convention at Atlanta, Georgia, to promote the construction of a continuous line of water communication, by natural and artificial channels, from St. Louis, Missouri, to Savannah, Georgia, a distance of about thirteen hundred miles.

Mr. Stanley, the New York Herald correspondent of Livingston-finding fame, has arrived in New York.

It is stated that there have been 80,000 deaths from cholera in Russia during the present year.

☞ One of the clergymen in Peoria, Ill., has been living in a parsonage that did not come up to his idea of what a minister should enjoy. Recently he was called upon to announce that there would be a mite society at the ministerial building. After saying that the mite society would be held at the parsonage, he paused a moment, and then remarked: "On the corner of the street near my residence is a well. Said well is covered and clap-boarded. It is unpainted and weather-worn: but I wish to describe it so that none of you may make a mistake and take the well for the parsonage. The mite society will be held in the parsonage, and not in the well."

☞ Speaking of the sad affliction of a citizen of Indiana who had recently lost his wife, a local editor says: "The broken-hearted man erected a pine-slab over his wife's grave, and presented a four hundred dollar piano to the young lady who was so kind to him in his hours of affliction."

☞ Some robbers having broken into a gentleman's house, went to the bed of a servant and told him if he moved he was a dead man. "That's a lie," said he, "for if I move I'm sure that I'm alive."

☞ A gentleman in Carroll county, Ga., made a furious attack upon the handle of a skillet, supposing it to be the head of a black snake protruding from under the stove.

☞ The Elizabeth (N. J.) Journal says that a certain undertaker there sent to one of the prominent physicians of that place a lot of death certificates with his card on them as a complimentary present to the doctor. What the doctor sent to the undertaker as an acknowledgment of the compliment we have not heard.

☞ A professor, preaching to a class of collegians about the formation of habits, said, recently: "Gentlemen, close your ears against bad discourses." The students immediately clapped their hands to their ears.

☞ The saddest instance of misplaced confidence on record is that of a Connecticut man who rescued another from a watery grave only to find that instead of his long-lost brother, it was a person to whom he owed three dollars and a half for turnips.

☞ Herr Driesbach, the once famous lion-tamer, lost his money, married for love, and settled down in Ohio.

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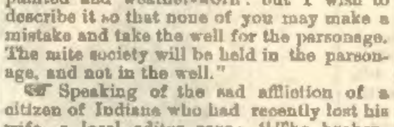

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WIT AND HUMOR.

ROUGH ON 'EM.

Jones has been playing a rough game on the musquitoes. You see he had a musquito net on his bed, but the persevering insects used to get inside in the daytime, and when Jones sought his couch to court the drowsy god, they used to make sweet music for him and let his blood out, and Jones, you understand, couldn't stand it at all. But he is square on the musquitoes now. He goes to bed and leaves the net about half-open, and then the musquitoes thinking they have got a soft thing, swarm in and begin to buzz. When he thinks they are all inside, Jones quietly slips out and closes up the net tight, and there he has them. And then he makes up a nice bed on the floor, and lies there and kicks up his heels, and laughs at the poor swindled musquitoes; and the musquitoes tear round in that net, and break their necks against the bars trying to get out, and they hold indignation meetings, and protest, and all that. Why, the musquitoes in that room look like living skeletons, and still Jones is heartless enough to keep right on fooling these poor insects and laughing at them.

The Heathen Chinee Learning to Smoke.

A New York Mail letter tells how a Chinaman learned to smoke a segar: As the puffs curled out from his lips his face was wreathed in smoke and smiles. He took it out and in silvery accents said, "Him good." Here a pause and more puffs of smoke. "Him heap good." Another pause and the puffs more rapid. "Him bully heap good." Yet another pause and he put one hand up to the segar. "Him berry bully heap good." Here both hands went up and the silence was broken by "Him big berry bully heap good." And then a change came over the spirit of his dream as his face changed from pie-crust to dust and ashes, and things assumed a tinge no longer celestial but cerulean until, with a gesture indescribable in its expressiveness, he slowly enumerated, "Him muchee muchee big berry bully heap good, but me no berry well here." Here he took off his washing basin, assumed an attitude indicative of digestive disarrangement, and—let history draw a veil over what followed.

A BAGGER BAGGED.

Peter Ross was an honest old farmer, who had for a neighbor one John Knobbs, an individual not distinguished for strict integrity, but, as Bunsby has it, "on the contrary, quite the reverse." One day Peter missed a meal bag, and having suspicions of its whereabouts, went across lots to Knobbs's barn, where he found the missing sack, took possession, and was returning, when he was met by Knobbs, who accosted him with:

"Where are you going with that bag?"

"Going home," said Peter; "it is my bag."

"Your bag! no, sir, it's my bag, and you stole it from my barn."

"I took it from your barn," said Peter, "but it's my bag and has got my mark on it," and he pointed to the initials "P. R." plainly marked upon it.

"Your initials!" said John, excited, "I rather guess not; that's my mark, P. for John and R. for Knobbs," don't you see, you old fool?"

Peter didn't see it in that light, and retained the bag; but P. for John and R. for Knobbs passed into a by-word that is not yet forgotten in the region round about the Passaqassawakag, where the larceny was committed some forty years since.

SHE CAME.—A pensive young man in Wisconsin, while singing, "Come, Love, Come," beneath his Dulcinea's window the other night, had love, music, wind and everything else knocked out of him by a something in a long white garment that fell out of a chamber window. It proved to be nobody but his girl, who, in her anxiety to know who it was serenading her, leaned too far over the window-sill; hence the result. He says when he sings "Come, Love, Come" again he will keep away from under the window, as his system cannot stand many such shocks.

SEA-SIDE DRAMA.

Mrs. de Tomkyns (*sotto voce to Mr. de T.*)—"Ludovic, dear, here's Algernon playing with a strange child! Do prevent it!" Mr. de T. (*ditto to Mrs. de T.*)—"How on earth am I to prevent it, my love?" Mrs. de T.—"Tell its parents Algernon is just recovering from scarlet fever or something." Mr. de T.—"But it is not true." Mrs. de T.—"Oh, never mind! Tell them all the same." Mr. de T.—(*aloud*)—"Ahem. Sir, you'd better not let your little girl play with my little boy. He's only just recovering from scarlet fever;" Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins (*together.*)—"It's all right, sir, so's our little gal!"

PARAGRAPHS.

A South street boy can make one hundred and sixty-five "faces" without sitting down. The feelings of his broken-hearted father, when reaching for him with a strap, can better be imagined than described.

A choral association forming here wants somebody to lead them. The people who live next door to where they rehearse are equally anxious for somebody to lead them; and the further he leads them the better these outraged people will feel.

A Belmforth avenue man was observed going up home this morning with a gun that will carry at least an ounce ball. As he lives next door to a young man who is learning to play Rory O'Moore on a pair of cymbals, we have thought it best to print an extra number of copies of our next issue. Orders left at the news-stands or this office will be attended to.—*Danbury News.*

THE KINGS.—A United States ship sailed once into the harbor of Naples, and the king and a glittering party of noblemen came off to visit her. To the honest Yankee sailor eyes, that could see no other sign of royalty than gold lace, one laced man was as much of a king as another. And as one of the royal party upon the deck tripped and disappeared, a sailor stepped up to an officer and, touching his hat with a grin, said briefly, "Please, sir, one of them 'ere kings has tumbled down the hatchway."

POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY.—We call the following Positive Philosophy. Will our "Medicine Men" take notice. "One of the Pi Ute medicine men," says a Dakota paper, "lately told his fellow Indians that when he died if they would cut him to pieces, his body would unite and he ascend to Heaven in a cloud of smoke. An experimental savage killed him at once, and the crowd cut him up, departing in disgust at the fallability of science when the parts lay as they were left."

THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE.—A strong-minded woman in Detroit made the following gentle reply to a politician who had called at her house to get her husband to go to the polls and vote: "No, sir, he can't go. He's washing now, and he's got to iron tomorrow, and if he wasn't doing anything he couldn't go. I run this 'ere house, I do, and if any one votes it'll be this same Mary Jane."

THE editor of one of our exchanges has just had his family reinforced, and makes the following remarks:—

Ring out wild bells—and tunes ones too—
Ring out the lover's moon,
Ring out the little slips and socks,
Ring in the bib and spoon;
Ring out the muse, ring in the nurse,
Ring in the milk and water;
Away with paper, pens and ink—
My daughter, oh, my daughter!

CRADLE SONG.

BY C. DAY NOBLE.

Fold thy snowy eyelids down
Over pansy-petaled eyes,
Let thy lashes' mossy brown
Fall like shade on sunset skies,
Sweet and golden
Baby, folden
In a nest of sanctities.

Winds and waters come and go,
Day in white and night in pall;
Blossoms in the green spring blow,
Fruits in yellow autumn fall.
Wake to kiss me!
Sleep! I miss thee,
Now the dreamland angels call.

Sorrow, baby, bringeth joy,
Work and waking, dreams and rest;
All the dear Lord's sweet employ
Is to rock us on his breast.
Life is rocking,
Death is flocking
To his arms as to a nest.

The Story of Helen Travers.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ELLA WHEELER.

It is not a pleasant story, and my pen is unwilling to relate it; yet since it may serve as a warning to some girl, tempted like Helen Travers, and save her from a like fate, I will tell it.

She was a bright, attractive girl, this Helen Travers. Not beautiful, but pretty, even handsome, in her own way, and with a certain charm about her, which some women possess, that made her a favorite with all.

She was an orphan, adopted by her aunt, with whom she made her home till her seventeenth year, when she chose school-teaching as her profession, and taught, year in and year out, till she was twenty-two. She had attention and admiration, beaux and lovers, as most girls have, but entered her twenty-second year without being engaged, or ever having been really in love.

It was then she went to Chilton, a thriving young town, to teach in the primary department of an Academy. And there she met her old friend, Dora Fairbanks, face to face in the street one day. She had lost all trace of her during the past two years, and there in Chilton she found her, no longer Dora Fairbanks but Mrs. Hinman, a happy wife and young mother. Dora insisted upon taking Helen home to dinner with her, and so she went. And there she met Ralph Hinman, Dora's husband. He was a handsome man, a *very* handsome man, with curling black hair, and brilliant black eyes and white teeth. He and his wife seemed devotedly attached to each other, and of course Mr. Hinman was very social and cordial with his wife's friend and guest. Helen went away thinking what an extremely pleasant husband her friend had; and Mr. Hinman remarked to his wife that her friend was a charming girl, and Dora agreed with him, and there was a mutual feeling of friendship all around.

Mrs. Hinman made Helen promise to be very informal, and drop into their cosey home as often as possible. Helen promised, and the old intimacy between the two was renewed. Scarcely a day passed that Helen did not call in, either going or coming from the Academy. One evening Mr. Hinman drove by, just as she was closing the school-yard gate, and seeing her, reined up his splendid bays, and asked her to ride with him. His road lay toward her cousin's home, with whom she boarded, and he took her to the door and left her there. It was something of a long walk, and she was glad of the ride.

Shortly after—a week, perhaps—she dropped in to see his wife a moment on her way to the Academy, and found Mr. Hinman just driving to the door, and accepted his invitation to ride to her destination. He told her then that he and his wife were going out into the country for a drive that evening, and asked her to accompany them. She accepted, and when the evening came he called for her, and the three went. By this time Helen Travers began to think Ralph Hinman the most thorough gentleman she ever met, and congratulated herself upon her friend's marrying so well. "If she had married a stupid or disagreeable man, I could not have enjoyed going to her home as I now do," she told herself. "It makes it so pleasant for me, having both so cordial."

A week or so later, Mrs. Hinman gave a little party, and she sent her husband with horse and carriage down for Helen. She looked lovely that night, and the host was very attentive and courtly, and after the party broke up, he drove her to her boarding-place again. When he left her at the door, he said, "To-morrow is Saturday! you are free on that day, and the weather bids fair to be pleasant, what do you say to a ride in the afternoon? You need more fresh air, and I know a lovely drive that you have never seen. Will you go?"

Now Helen Travers had reached the dividing line between safety and danger, just then. Heretofore, the attentions she had received from her friend's husband, had been proper and right. In the majority of the cases they had been accidental, and when otherwise they had been of a nature the most prudish could not object to. But now he was asking her to take a pleasure drive—with no object, no excuse, but for enjoyment of the day, and each other's society, and by accepting, she was taking her first imprudent step. But it was a tempting offer. A warm sunny day, as it would doubtless be, a stylish equipage, a handsome, fascinating companion. Where could the harm be? He was her friend, his wife was her dear friend. That wife had insisted upon her riding to school with him the morning she happened in, and she had sent Ralph for her the evening of the party. Would she not think it strange, and almost prudish, if she should refuse his kind invitation now? She thought so, and accepted it.

The following day proved to be warm and sunny. Mr. Hinman drove around for her after dinner. "Dora is so busy she could not go along with us," he said as he assisted her into the carriage, "but she sent you her love, and hopes you will enjoy the afternoon."

And Helen certainly *did* enjoy the afternoon. The day was perfect, the roads smooth, the scenery beautiful, and Ralph Hinman a most agreeable companion. Helen thought she had never been in the society of so pleasant a man in her life before. They rode all the afternoon, and reached Mr. Hinman's, just at twilight. Dora saw them coming, and ran out to the gate. "It is just tea-time," she said, "and Helen must come in and take supper with us before she goes home. I want to hear all about your ride. I am so glad you went. You need more exercise in the open air than you get, and I hope you and Ralph will improve as many of these golden days as possible."

And they did. Mrs. Hinman's words removed the last shadow of doubt regarding the propriety of the thing, from Helen's mind, and she felt free to accept all invitations from Mr. Hinman. She forgot or ignored the fact that other people had eyes and tongues, besides Dora Hinman, and had less faith in Ralph, and were more uncharitable. "If Dora was willing and approved, whose business was it?" she said.

She had been with him half a dozen times, perhaps, before a word was said. Then her cousin, a lady many years her senior, with whom she boarded, gently remonstrated.

"Helen, are you not imprudent to go out so much with a married man?"

Helen flushed and looked indignant. "I am sure I don't see how I am imprudent. I hope you don't think I am in danger of falling in love with Mr. Hinman."

THE NEXT MORNING.

So very stiff after the first day at hunting! And *then* to be caught on the archery ground after breakfast!

"No, I don't say that. But people will talk, I am afraid. It is a habit people have, and it is unpleasant to be gossiped about," the friend answered.

"Well, I don't see what they can have to say, so long as Mrs. Hinman approves of the state of affairs. If we rode or walked together without her knowledge, or against her wishes, it would be different. But she approves, and frequently goes with us, so where is the harm?"

"There is no harm, so long as she goes with you. But when a married man and a young lady ride or walk together repeatedly, merely for the pleasure of recreation, the gossips have an opportunity to *talk*, and usually make use of it."

"Well, let them talk then. I am doing nothing wrong, and I don't care if they do. But I have no fears that anything will be said."

When a young lady arrives at the conclusion that she doesn't care what people say, she has taken a long step in the wrong direction. Even if she is assured she is doing no wrong, she had better take pains to avoid gossip. "Stoop not down to fasten thy shoe in a melon-patch, and lift not thy hand to adjust thy hat in a fruit orchard," is a very wise proverb.

That very evening Helen went riding with Ralph Hinman. It was a glorious moonlight night, and as she took her seat at his side, and saw his dark eyes smiling down upon her, she thrilled from head to foot with a sensation which she could not describe or understand. It was her own heart warning her of danger; whispering to her that besides the danger of the gossips' tongues, she herself was not safe in this daily intercourse with Ralph Hinman. No matter how strong in principle and virtue a girl may be, no matter how high her standard of truth and purity, if she receives the marked attentions of a handsome, fascinating married man, allows him to compliment her, and ride with her, and play the agreeable generally, she is treading on dangerous ground, and is not safe.

But she would not heed her heart's warning, and even when she found herself watching for him, and longing for the hour to come when she could see him, she told herself and her cousin that her feeling for Ralph Hinman was only friendship. "I certainly *do* like him," she said, "and he likes me. There can be such a thing as pure, strong friendship between men and women."

One evening Dora sent down for her to go up and spend the evening. Ralph was gone, she said, and they would have a good, old-fashioned chat.

Helen went, and before the evening had half gone Ralph came. He kissed his wife and children, and shook hands with Helen.

"Why don't you serve all alike?" laughed Dora. "I think you might kiss Helen, as well as me. She is my sister; I have adopted her, and you ought to kiss her."

"I fear she might object to that," Ralph answered, laughing, his dangerous eyes bringing the blood to Helen's cheeks. Nothing more was said on the subject, and the evening passed pleasantly.

At ten, Helen said she must go; so Ralph had the carriage brought around, and drove her home. Just before he reached the gate he found the carriage wrap had slipped down, and put his arm around Helen to adjust it. Put his arm around her, and did not take it away. She glanced up, and met his dark eyes. "Kiss me," he whispered, his head bent down till she could feel his breath upon her cheek. She hesitated, but remembering his wife's words, lifted her lips till they met his in a long, long, lingering kiss. Yes, his wife had told him to kiss her, and yet neither would have liked that wife to witness the kiss he gave her. "A kiss of friendship," Helen said; but both knew that no mere friend ever gave another a kiss like that. A kiss which sent every drop of blood in her body leaping through her veins and burning in her cheeks; a kiss which kept her awake half the night, and when she did sleep, haunted her dreams with its burning fervor. Oh, yes! it was a kiss of friendship. Kisses of friendship are often exchanged between fascinating married men and handsome young ladies.

The kiss was repeated at their next meeting, which was in Ralph's home, but somehow both chose a time when Dora was out of the room.

People were beginning to talk by this time. One was saying to another that "It didn't look very well for that young teacher to be flirting with a married man." Another wondered what Mrs. Hinman thought about; and Helen's cousin heard these things, and told Helen of them. So Helen went to Mrs. Hinman, and asked her if she objected to her riding with Ralph. "People are beginning to trouble themselves about it," she explained, "and I thought you were the one to object, if any."

"Object! Why, bless you," cried the simple Dora, "I like to have you and Ralph sociable. I shall object if you are not, and it is nobody's business but mine."

Helen concluded that people were talking about what did not concern them, and out of a spirit of independence flirted more than ever with Ralph Hinman. And now whenever they were alone, the kiss or the kisses, instead of being the exception, were the rule. They grew longer and sweeter, and the clasp of the arm which accompanied them was *not* the caress of a friend. It was a passionate, lover-like embrace. Helen Travers's very soul was becoming bound up in Ralph Hinman. She was restless and unhappy out of his presence; flushed, animated, glowing, when with him. And yet she told herself it was only friendship. The weeks went by. People talked more and more, and at last the affair was in everybody's mouth. One evening they were riding together. It was almost a year since their first meeting. They met a woman who stared rudely at them.

"One of the gossips," Helen said, "who has all she can do to take care of us, Mr. Hinman."

"Yes, I hear people are becoming worried about us," Ralph laughed. They were nearing a wood road. He slipped his arm about her and looked down upon her with passionate eyes. "Do you know what I wish?" he said. "I wish their words were true. I wish you *did* love me as I love you. Hush! Do not try to stop me. I love you as I never loved a woman before, with all my heart and soul and strength. Darling, go with me—be mine, give yourself to me, body and soul."

He crushed her to his heart and kissed her passionately on her mouth. She clung to him, sobbing and shivering. It was a delight to listen to his words of love, yet they frightened her. She would not consent to his proposal then. But ere a week had flown she *did* consent. She could not give him up, and he told her it must either be a final separation, or she must go with him. So she went. It caused a great scandal. People said "I told you so," and Mrs. Hinman was nearly crazed. She went back to her parents with her children, and Ralph and Helen were seen no more in Chilton. But two years later Ralph returned to his wife. He begged to be restored to her favor again, and she—remember how simple she always was—took him back. Helen, he said, was dead. It was the usual story, a few months of delirium and passion, then a reaction, disgust, revilings, sickness, disgrace, shame, death. Helen was buried, without even a slab to mark her resting place. Ralph wandered awhile, and then returned to his wife. He was in disgrace for some time; but those things are in a measure forgotten in men, and he moves in respectable society again to-day.

Too Kind by Half.

We find the following in the American News of Frankfort. It doubtless has made two voyages across the Atlantic before reaching us, and so should be thoroughly seasoned. We commend Crockett's advice to the young man—"Be sure you are right, then go ahead," with special emphasis on the "then:"

A young and energetic gentleman of Hartford, noted for the promptness and decision with which he always acts in cases of emergency, took the train on the Hartford, Providence and Fishkill Road for Waterbury, where he had business to transact. When the train reached Plainwell a number of passengers alighted as usual. In the seat opposite our gentleman friend were a lady and her boy, a little fellow five or six years of age. As the cars stopped the lady peered out of the window, seized the boy by the hand, and walked with him to the rear of the car. The two had scarcely passed out of sight before our energetic young friend noticed that the boy's hat, a tin whistle, whip, and other toys were lying on the seat which had just been vacated. The train started, and hastily concluding that the lady had left them in her hurry to get out of the car, our friend rushed across the aisle, and gathering them up threw them out of the window. A change came o'er the spirit of his dream as the lady, a moment or two later, returned up the aisle leading the boy by the hand. The laugh heard in the car made our younng friend sick.

A Happy Thought.

An amiable Pennsylvania gentleman, married to his second wife, lately held a matrimonial conversation of a peppery nature with that lady. Inasmuch as her rhetorical powers were infinitely finer and more varied than his, she presently scattered the opposing force in dismay. He was about to retire to solitude, therein to "suck the sweets of sweet philosophy," when he was suddenly struck by that mental brickbat popularly known as a happy thought. He turned like the trampled worm and informed the victorious trampler that there was one thing anyway—she was not nearly so good-looking as his first! What could a poor, abused creature do but burst into rivers of tears, and defy him to the proof? As there were no relics of departed beauty about the house in the shape of photographs or preternatural paintings, the desperate man paused for one humiliating instant, when another brickbat came at him and he was happy. He remembered that an excellent portrait of his first had been deposited with her in the silent tomb. Thither he rushed, there he dug with a triumphant spade, and thence he carried the convincing picture. Crushed to the earth, his second rose again only to confess that his blood-curdling assertion was too, too true.

Steam Wagons for our Common Roads

On we go. The horse is gradually being superseded. There was a steam-wagon for common roads exhibited at the Augusta, Ga., fair. The Constitutionalist says: "Two large wagons and three carts loaded with bricks were first attached to the steamer. This load she pulled around the grounds with perfect ease, travelling as fast as when unencumbered. As a still further test, two wagons filled with men and boys were added to the already long train, and, as before, the steamer moved off and went around the grounds apparently without difficulty. These tests demonstrated, beyond a doubt, that these steamers can be used with great advantage on ordinary roads to haul loads. They are not made for speed, but simply for strength."

☞ The prevalent hippoymosis has attacked the horse-chestnut-trees.

THE DANCE OF THE ELVES.

BY HIS LATE MAJESTY KING CHARLES OF SWEDEN.

No longer do the sun's bright rays of gold
Shoot from the azure vault; far westward rolled,
A crimson glory dies; the stars,
Shy and serene, appear;
The curling waves all stilly kiss the shore;
Only from distant hills comes evermore
A sound that jars on nature's mood:
The shadowy night draws near.

Hark! Is that Necken playing on his reed?
No, for the music wells from yonder mead;
The singers are the nightingales
That haunt the oak's green crown.
Stay! Now the silvery notes ring far and clear;
In light and airy circles swinging near,
From the dim coverts of the wood,
A troop of elves trip down.

Far over amber fields of summer grain,
And beds of blossoms fed on summer rain,
In a fresh, joyous dance, I mark
Their white feet flash and whirl,
In tarted hedges throughout all the land,
The merry winds laugh low to see the band
Swing round their king and queen, enthroned
In crowns and robes of pearl.

They fill their shimmering goblets, one and all,
From dews that gently in the twilights fall—
Rich nectar draughts to pledge their queen.
The dance grows wild and fleet;
In long-drawn, vaporous chains, through grassy vales,
It floats—it soars—it flies o'er hills and dales.
Fantastic, rapid as the wind,
They tread a measure sweet.

Through latticed leaves the wide-eyed moon shines fair,
The sleepier stars are nodding in mid-air,
As soft, caressing murmurs fill
Each secret forest home.
Far in the east faint purple streaks of light
Begin to pierce the misty veil of night;
The witching sport has vanished like a dream—
No more the elves dare roam.

The English Cat Show.

The Cat Show at the Crystal Palace in London is generally spoken of in the newspapers of that city. Each cat is enclosed in a neat wire-work cage, with plenty of room for the biggest of them. In each cage is a cushion for the inmate to repose upon. They are well supplied with both meat and milk. The number exhibited, including kittens, is nearly 400. They are divided into four great classes, with prizes ranging from two guineas to five shillings, including short-haired, long-haired, and cats belonging exclusively to workingmen. These are again divided into 48 classes, beginning with the short-haired tortoise-shell he-cat and going through all the varieties of brown tabbies, blue or silver tabbies, black and whites, pure white and unusual colors. Among the interesting animals in the show is the ocelot, or young tiger-cat. There is a tortoise-shell he-cat valued by its owner at £50. A tortoise-shell he-cat short-haired is something entirely new—cats of that marking being almost invariably "shes." No. 95 is valued by its owners, two maiden ladies, at £500. To crown all, there is a cat weighing 22 pounds without his collar.

☞ A lady up town, who read in a paper that they were going to bring Shakspeare out at one of the Philadelphia theatres, said she would dearly love to go down and see the man who wrote "Romeo and Juliet;" but she thought Mr. Shakspeare must be pretty old now, because he was playing at the theatres when she was a little girl.—*Norristown Herald.*

☞ The following advertisement appears in a Canadian paper: "Will the gentleman who stole my melons last Saturday night, be generous enough to send me a few of the seeds, as they are a choice variety?"

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces *double* rates on the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

...e remember seeing a ... farmers, riding into the country, point to some cedar bushes by the wayside, and inquire if they were potatoes. A farmer would perhaps have called her a fool. Yet said farmer in the city might possibly make as absurd mistakes, and be laughed at in turn by the unbotanical lady. In their usual positions neither would be either silly or absurd.

REEL, (Illinois) asks: "Will you please inform me where I can get a book that tells one how to call the figures for a cotillion? I understand there are such books printed, but do not know where. If you will give me this information, together with the price of the book, you will greatly oblige." There are numerous works on the art of dancing, ranging in price from fifty cents to one or two dollars. If you wish we can procure you one containing the information desired.

C. O., (Pendleton, S. C.), writes: "I wish to ask of you a few words of advice. There is a certain young lady who, whenever I meet her, seems to throw my nerves out of order. I feel cold and hot by turns. My heart jumps up and down like a churn-dasher. I become nervous, timid and even afraid to look up, that is, when I am conscious that she is looking at me. But when she does happen to catch me looking at her, and gives me one of those sweet, fascinating smiles, gosh, don't I feel juicy about the heart? I tell you, Mr. Editor, I feel just like my heart was melting. I seem to be possessed of some kind of supernatural feeling. Now will you be so kind as to tell me the cause of all those queer feelings? Do you think my case a dangerous one? What would you do under the circumstances?" The only new disease which appears to be going the rounds is that which has been so prettily named the Epizooty. We should say, then, that our correspondent was afflicted with this mellifluously-named disease, but that it appears to be confined to the equine family, and that the symptoms are somewhat different from his. In fact, taking a complete diagnosis of his case, we are inclined to think that he is attacked with an old form of heart disease, one which attacked our distant ancestor, Adam, when he woke up in Paradise, and saw the new-born source of all masculine heart-ache by his side. The symptoms of his disease have been very minutely described by an old writer, who is said to have thoroughly understood it. The writer referred to is one Sappho, a native of ancient Greece. We give part of her diagnosis.

"With subtle flames my bosom glows,
Quick through each vein the poison flows,
Dark, dimming mists my eyes surround,
My ears with hollow murmurs sound,
My limbs with dewy chillness freeze,
On my whole frame pale tremblings seize,
And, losing color, sense and breath,
I seem quite languishing in death."

These are said to be sure indications of the disease called Love. If they suit your case, you had better at once attempt a cure. Don't try the usual treatment of pressing a feminine angel to the affected part. This only aggravates the symptoms. You had better take a full dose of the herb called Wedlock. This has effected more cures, in some cases by the power of alleviation, in others by that of irritation, than any other treatment we know of.

C. P. (Pittsburg, Pa.,) says: "I have been a reader of the Post for a long time, and have a very high opinion of it, in fact, I think it the best paper published. I have received a vast amount of useful information from your 'Answers to correspondents' and if not trespassing too much on your time, I would like to ask a few questions: 1st. What is the meaning of the term 'A cycle of Cathay,' and where can it be found? 2d. Who was the first Plantagenet, and from what did the name originate? 3d. Why was Napoleon called the little corporal?" 1st. "A Cycle of Cathay" is an expression used in Tennyson's poem of Locksley Hall. The line, we think, reads—

"Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay."

Cathay is the old name for China, and the object of the poet is to contrast the activity and rapid progress of Europe with the sluggishness and the sleepy character of Asiatic civilizations. To his mind there is more real life in fifty years of the stir of Europe than in a cycle of the sluggish movement of China. 2d. Henry II. was the first ruler of the Plantaganet race. The name originated with Fulk, the first Earl of Anjou. He, being remorseful *for* some act of wickedness, went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem as an atonement. Here his penance was completed by his being soundly scourged with broom twigs, which grew plentifully on the spot. Hence he took the surname of Plantagenet, which means broom-cord. He became King of Jerusalem in 1131. His son married Matilda, daughter of Henry I., and he son became King of England, as Henry II. 3d. Napoleon obtained this title as a joke of his soldiers, after the battle of Lodi in 1796. On account of his youth they undertook to give him a fictitious promotion from the ranks, and promoted him to corporal for his valor in the above action. The epithet "little" referred to his low stature. The title took so with the army that they never promoted him further.

[Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.]

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

GEOGRAPHICAL ENIGMA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 14 letters.

My 1, 5, 7, 4, 8, is the name of a beautiful foreign island. It is called the garden of England.

My 14, 1, 5, 13, 2, is the name of a river in Europe.

My 5, 10, 14, 5, 2, 6, 12, is the name of one of the United States.

My 3, 2, 6, 8, 5, 12, 7, 9, is the name of a city in South America.

My 7, 12, 11, 11, 5, 10, 12, 3, is the name of a cape on the coast of America.

My whole is a portion of North America, discovered by Dr. Kane in the year 1854, in his Arctic voyage in search of Sir John Franklin.

Seaboard, N. C. EUGENE.

BURIED TOWNS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

1. It is not always easy to carom at billiards.
2. I saw Reuben to-night.
3. They started on Wednesday to New Mexico.
4. Alas! all ever I did was wrong.
5. I knew the woman ten or eleven years ago.
6. To give to the poor is both right and just.
7. From the front room a hall ran back to the kitchen.
8. "Bid me hope, or I am gone forever!"
9. Masons use rock for divers purposes.

Fort Totten, D. T. GAHMEW.

WORD SQUARES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I.

A tree.
A river.
A city.
An ancient country.

II.

A prohibition.
An Island.
Small.
A gem.

Seaboard, N. C. EUGENE.

ANAGRAMS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I.

I'm first a tax; and then transpose me,
A mark of pity you'll expose me.

II.

A vessel for wine transpose,
An English fruit it will disclose.

H. S.

PROBLEM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

From a point without a triangle, equally distant from all its angles, perpendiculars are drawn to the three sides, which measure respectively 13, 51, and 75 rods. Required—the sides of the triangle.

☞ An answer is requested.

E. P. NORTON.

Allen, Hillsdale, Co., Mich.

ANSWERS TO LAST.

HISTORICAL ENIGMA—

"You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will,
But the scent of the roses will cling to it still."

BURIED TOWNS—1. Lewiston. 2. Charleston. 3. Rosemount. 4. Northeast. 5. Helena. 6. Ithaca. 7. Rome. 8. Waco. 9. Keene. 10. Theresa. 11. Shasta. 12. Salem. 13. Lee.

WORD SQUARES—

I.	II.	III.
MOTE	TEA	SEA
OPAL	END	ELL
TALL	ADA	ALE
ELLA		

CONCEALED ACROSTIC—World.

RECEIPTS.

TO ROAST A GOOSE.—Having prepared a goose for the purpose, truss it nicely and put it before a moderate fire. Let it lose all the oil it will, and baste it with a preparation in another dish of browned butter, salt, pepper, a little water, a teaspoon of the extract of sage and summer savory. If not offensive, add a drop or two of garlic. Keep the drippings separate from the basting until nearly done, when the basting-pan may be set underneath the goose. In making the gravy use the basting, or make a fresh gravy of browned butter, flavored with the extracts or not, as desired. If no extracts are used, add a little lemon juice to the sauce. Geese are so strong as to require additional seasoning to overcome their natural flavor.

APPLE FLOAT.—One pint stewed and well-mashed apples, whites of three eggs, and four large spoonfuls of sugar, beaten until stiff; then add the apple, and beat all together till stiff enough to stand alone. Fill a deep dish with rich cream or boiled soft custard, and pile the float on top. This is excellent with other fruits, in place of the apple.

LEMON PIE.—2 lemons, 4 eggs, 9 tablespoons of white sugar; grate the peel and chop the lemon fine, and stir it into the yelks and sugar; put it into your puff paste and bake it. While it is baking, beat the whites of the eggs till they are stiff, and then add three tablespoons of sugar. When the pie is done, spread the beaten whites smoothly over the top and warm it lightly in the oven.

LEMON PIE—ANOTHER.—2 eggs, 1 cup of sugar, the juice and rind of one lemon, crust the same as pie crust.

GINGER SNAPS.—Two cups of molasses, one cup of lard or butter, warmed together add one tablespoonful each of ginger, soda and salt, with a half cup of water. Mix in just sufficient flour to roll out, and cut out with a cake cutter. Roll to about one-eighth of an inch in thickness, and bake in a quick oven. This makes nearly a peck of thin, crisp, brown snaps. They are best kept in a basket in a cool, dry closet.

MOLASSES GINGERBREAD.—One cup of molasses, one-half cup of brown sugar, a piece of butter as large as an egg, two-thirds cup of sour milk, one egg, one teaspoonful of soda, and flour to thicken. Warm, but do not boil the molasses.